CRISIS IN KENYA

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By

S. AND K. AARONOVITCH

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## AUTHORS' NOTE

WE wish to thank those African and European friends with lifelong and intimate knowledge of Kenya whose assistance has proved of the greatest value to us in writing this book. To one friend in particular, who farmed in Kenya for many years, we owe a good deal for his help in Chapter IV. A new feature of the book is the estimates of National Income for Kenya (one of the few yet made for a colonial country) prepared for us by two economists. Thanks are also due to Mr. P. W. Norman for his valuable comparison of Kenya and British income tax laws, and, finally, to Mrs. Hilda Wright, who had the laborious job of typing the manuscript.

All information on directorships, membership of Government boards, etc., must be considered with reference to its date and may be changed by subsequent events.

S. AND K. AARONOVITCH.

LONDON,

*August 11th, 1946.*

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THE war against German and Japanese fascism, which concluded in 1945, brought with it immense changes in all parts of the world. In almost every country the forces of democracy have gathered strength. Peoples like the Yugoslavs, tyrannised by dictatorships in 1939, have created vigorous democratic States. In the colonial countries like Indonesia, Indo-China, Malaya, Burma and India, the national movement of the people has become stronger, more clear-sighted. And in Africa, where hundreds of thousands of Askari left home to fight on the battlefields of Abyssinia and Burma, there too the peoples are awakening to political action. The people of Britain, sharing in the democratic impulses which have swept the world, have elected a Labour Government with a decisive majority.

To-day these forces for progress are gravely threatened. The reactionaries of the imperialist countries, who, even at the height of the battle, were concerned that the defeat of fascism should not lead to the strengthening of the U.S.S.R., to popular revolution, or to colonial liberation, are attempting to revive those dangerous policies which led to World War Number Two.

The British Labour Government faces a grave choice. Will it go forward in friendship and close alliance with the forces of democracy or will it continue the reactionary imperialist policy of its Tory predecessors? For the colonial peoples the former alternative means speedy independence and assistance in raising their living standards; the latter alternative means continued economic exploitation, and the control of their territories as military bases in a new era of imperialist rivalry.

So far the Labour Government has chosen to follow the Tory imperialist policy. Nowhere is this clearer than in East Africa where the colony of our study—Kenya—is situated.

In the eyes of the imperialists the whole of Africa to-day is a vast military base.[1] East Africa assumes a special importance. The

[1] "Modern aircraft, bombs and rockets demand the dispersion of war industries to a much greater depth. In Africa we have that depth adjoining Europe and Asia. . . ." Brigadier G. S. Brunskill, *Crown Colonist*, July, 1946.

". . . In Mombasa and Freetown we have two great Imperial bases. . . . Given time and patience, we can build up a first-class African army. Who pays does not matter; at all costs, the War Office must command and control it." Lord Tweedsmuir, quoted, *African Transcripts*, May, 1946. Also, "Two-thirds of that empire

strength of the national movements in India and Egypt has made Britain seek additional means of maintaining strategic control of the Indian Ocean and the Suez Canal. For control of the Suez Canal, East Africa shares with Palestine the "honour" of being a key base. "The important matter is to have an agreement with the Egyptian Government whereby we can maintain base installations in Egypt and can fly in British reinforcements, say from Kenya or Palestine at short notice in an emergency."[1]

It is this strategy which led Britain to put forward her scheme for the inter-territorial organisation of Kenya, Uganda, and Tanganyika. It is this strategy also which has determined her attitude to the Tanganyika Mandate[2] and led her to plan the unification of Italian colonies and a part of Ethiopia with her own territory of British Somaliland.

British Somaliland, neglected for many years, has still not even a railway. Eritrea is served by a splendid road system, a railway system, a modern port and repair base at Massawa, a telegraph system operating to all parts of the world, airport facilities, and all-weather landing grounds.[3] Italian Somaliland has "a great network of good motor roads," a railway and "ports which have been extended and developed out of all recognition."[4]

Listeners to Mr. Bevin in June, 1946, might be pardoned for being sceptical when they heard the following:

"In all innocence, we propose that British Somaliland, Italian Somaliland, and the adjacent part of Ethiopia . . . be lumped together as a trust territory so that the nomads should lead their frugal existence with the least possible hindrance, and there will be a real chance of decent economic life, as understood in that territory. . . . All I want to do in this case is to give those poor nomads a

lies in the African continent. That continent is now of vital strategic significance, and whatever the upshot of the talks with the people of India and Egypt, it will not detract from that significance, but may very well enhance it." *E. A. and Rh.*, December 12th, 1946, quoting Lord Tweedsmuir's speech on defence proposals in the House of Lords.

[1] Lieut.-General H. G. Martin, *Daily Telegraph* correspondent, quoted, *Times of India*, May 8th, 1946.

[2] Draft terms of trusteeship (Cmd. 6935) have been drawn up in a way which will tighten Britain's grip. These terms were characterised by the Soviet delegate as showing "a desire to create trusteeship conditions which would actually incorporate the territories under trusteeship into the mandatory country." U.N.O. General Assembly, December 13th, 1946.

[3] *E.A. and Rh.*, June 6th, 1946. [4] W. R. Foran, *Crown Colonist*, July, 1946.

chance to live . . . it is to nobody's interest to stop the poor cattle and people there getting a living. . . . How this can be interpreted as a desire to extend the British Empire I really cannot understand."

These moves bring with them the encouragement of South African imperialism which is seeking economic and political penetration of other African territories. "Whitehall," wrote Brigadier G. S. Brunskill, "must not alienate South Africans by showing suspicion of plans for the extension of their interests in Africa. We must welcome Smuts following in the footsteps of Rhodes."[1]

Who gains from the policy of imperialism?

Not the British people, but at all times the financiers and industrialists who stand behind the Tory Party. They are opposed to the advance of democracy everywhere, and especially in the colonies. It is from the colonies that they draw much of their wealth and power. Theirs is the policy now continued by the Labour Government. Its results can only be disastrous for the British people.

A new anti-imperialist policy is vital for our peace and prosperity.

It means abandoning Tory plans in India, the Middle East and our other colonial possessions. Peace would be safeguarded by full co-operation with the U.S.S.R., the new democracies and other nations in the United Nations Organisation. Eritrea would go to Ethiopia, thus giving her an outlet to the sea. The other Italian colonies would come under international trusteeship. The right of the peoples of the Mandated territories to independence within a specified time would be unhesitatingly declared, the fullest encouragement given to the national movements within colonial countries, and plans worked out which would prepare them for independence. Close economic relations directed to raising the living standards of the colonial peoples could then bring many advantages to Britain.

In this book we describe the effects of imperialism on a colony which has long been regarded as a touchstone of British colonial policy. On the basis of our analysis we present what we believe to be a practical programme of economic and political advance, and in doing so hope to contribute to the working out of a democratic, anti-imperialist policy towards the colonies such as the Labour movement should support.

[1] *Crown Colonist*, July, 1946. Note in this connection Britain's support in the Trusteeship committee of U.N.O. for South Africa's proposal to incorporate South-West Africa in South Africa.

CHAPTER I

# THE COUNTRY AND THE PEOPLE

IN the present political map of Africa, Kenya is shown as a red patch bounded in the north by the Sudan and Abyssinia and in the east by Italian Somaliland. To the west is Uganda and to the south the British Mandated Territory of Tanganyika. The country lies between Lake Victoria and the Indian Ocean, divided into two unequal parts by the Equator.

Kenya is roughly twice the size of the British Isles, but only an area two-thirds the size of England and Wales can support any substantial population. A glance at the territory reveals natural conditions which have for very many years arbitrarily decided the distribution of population.

Kenya can be divided into four natural zones.

First there is a coastal zone, in size a little more than 1 per cent. of the total area of the country. It contains the lower courses of Kenya's only two rivers of any note—the Tana and the Athi. It has a tropical climate and fair rainfall. Agriculture is possible and has been practised for generations by the tribes who live there.

Second, there is to the west and north of the coastal area a great dry region which covers more than four-fifths of the colony. It is poorly watered, only the two rivers already mentioned succeeding in making their way through its dry waste to the sea. The greater part is pure desert. Much of the rest is tsetse-fly infested. Only in the south, in the Teita and Taveta districts, does permanent grassland exist. Nowhere is there soil suitable for agriculture. Before the British occupation, it supported only a few nomadic tribes—Somali for the most part—who lived by herding their far from prosperous cattle. These nomadic tribes are the main inhabitants of the area to-day also.

The third zone lies in the south-west of the colony—an area of highlands covering about 13 per cent. of the total area of the territory. It is approached by way of steppe land, which gives way with rising altitude to temperate forest and evergreen pasture. The climate is moderate and the area watered in its most favourable parts by streams and twice yearly rains. Here conditions are suitable for agriculture, and here before the British occupation agricultural

tribes like the Kikuyu practised their system of shifting cultivation. The not-so-well-watered plains were the province of the pastoral tribes—the Kamba, the Meru and the Masai.

The fourth zone—a very small area between the Highlands and Lake Victoria—is composed of a central plain and valley regions. The climate is tropical and watercourses numerous. Before soil erosion had ravaged a great part of the area, it consisted of deep, fertile soil and was cultivated by a great agricultural tribe—the Kavirondo.

The third and fourth zones have always contained the great bulk of the territory's population.

The tribes who lived in Kenya before the British occupation were still, with the possible exception of the mixed people of the coast, at a subsistence level of economy.

The pastoral tribes, such as the Masai, lived off their herds, which they pastured over a vast area from Lake Randolph in the north to the present border of Tanganyika in the south.

The agricultural peoples living in the hill and forest area cultivated maize, sorghum and millet, peas and beans, sweet potatoes, cassava, yams and pumpkins, bananas and sugar-cane. They also pastured herds on unused land, forest clearings and on the plains near their settlements.

From time to time the tribes raided each other's territory, carrying off cattle and women, and enlarging their territory as the result of a victory.

Within this economic framework, the only wealth a man could accumulate took the form of cattle and goats and sheep. Cattle and goats were the currency of the country. They were used for the payment of recompense when the elders gave adverse judgment, for legal fees for the elders, for admission dues to the various age-grades, for the bride-price, for rent where this applied, and for sacrifice. Their use as currency bulked very large, and numbers tended to enhance a man's prestige.

Such trade as had developed between the tribes and with Arab caravans from the coast depended on chance surpluses of crops and livestock. The expert smiths who made weapons from surface deposits of iron were in some tribes grouped into a clan of their own. They did not, however, live mainly by selling their products, but like the rest of the tribe, on the produce of their own plots of land. Most crafts, such as housebuilding and potting, were normal functions of the family group.

The social organisation of people living at this level was primarily directed against human enemies on the one hand and natural enemies on the other. This required some sort of combination and pooling of resources, whether to resist a raid or make the best use of available land.

In Kenya the social unit was the tribe. The tribe was divided into a number of clans, the clans into sub-clans or family groups, and the sub-clan into individual families.

The clan was not an administrative unit. Members of the clan were scattered all over the territory of the tribe. The administrative unit for all practical purposes of government and defence was what is now called a location, occasionally a collection of locations, inhabited by people who spoke the same language and claimed a common ancestry.

Each member of the tribe had particular duties to perform at a particular stage in his or her life.

The tribes were organised in a system of age-grades. For the first few years of a boy's life, he had certain duties to perform: assisting in the hut, weeding the land, herding the cattle—but he tended to be left very much to himself and was subject to little discipline. At the end of this period, usually at puberty, he was initiated into the tribal customs. This initiation centred round circumcision, and although the actual operation, as in the case of the Masai, might be carried out singly, the final graduation ceremony was always a social event embracing a large number of youths, who thus formed an "age-grade." During this period of graduation a youth received all his formal education. He was instructed in the traditions and legends of his tribe, in personal hygiene and in his rights and duties as a member of tribal society. When graduation was complete, the new age-grade took over the defence of their people and became the warrior class. During this time they were subjected to rigorous military discipline, and though allowed to practise certain regulated sexual customs, they might not marry and had to avoid begetting children. In most tribes they lived apart, always ready to make or repel a raid. They continued as warriors for some time. Then, though in emergency they might still be called on to fight, they settled down, took wives and set up their families and their farms. Later still they passed into the lowest grade of elders and began to study the administration of justice and the settling of disputes.

There were usually five grades of elders, admission to the higher grades being regulated by fees and by such provisions as having

grandchildren. The elders were responsible for all administration, both legislative and judicial, maintained the customs of the tribe, and, where it was considered essential, approved amendments to them. At his death a man was supposed to pass one further stage into the great company of ancestors, who kept a somewhat jealous watch over the doings of their descendants and required frequent sacrifices of goats. These religious ceremonies, too, had to be carried out under the direction of an elder.

These stages applied, with necessary modifications, to women as well as men, and in some tribes the advice of women was listened to with respect. Women had their set duties allotted to them. When the men had broken the land, the women tilled it. When the men had built the framework of a house, the women thatched it. They were in no sense treated as chattels or mere beasts of burden. Though the settlement of the bride-price—a number of cattle and goats paid by the family of the bridegroom to that of the bride in compensation for the loss of her labour—was made between men, it was unusual for a man to enter into negotiations without first obtaining the girl's consent. The settlement was not one of sale or purchase, but a social act performed to effect a rapprochement between two families. Nor was polygamy entirely to the disadvantage of the women. No girl of marriageable age was left "on the shelf," and though the first wife headed the female side of the household, all had rights within the family.

The impact of British imperialism on this tribal society is described in further chapters.

CHAPTER II

# A COLONY IN THE MAKING

UNTIL the nineteenth century, only the coast of East Africa had held interest for alien Powers. The Persians established towns there—outposts of their great Empire. The Portuguese held uneasy sway there from the fifteenth to eighteenth centuries. The Arabs finally established themselves in dominions under the rule of the Sultans of Zanzibar, and, until the latter part of the nineteenth century, controlled the coast and a prosperous slave trade. These developments, however, had at no time much effect on the tribes of the interior, whose region was separated from the coast by a wide desert belt.

Until about 1860 the European Powers had little interest in the prospect of colonies in Africa. In 1827 the British Foreign Office had with little reluctance relinquished control of Mombasa, which had been declared a British Protectorate. Yet less than sixty years later Britain was avidly seeking the control, not only of Mombasa, but of all East Africa—and much more besides. The explanation of this altered attitude lay in the changes taking place in European capitalism.

By 1860 Britain's role as the "workshop of the world" became seriously menaced. In the face of rising competition from France and, later, Germany, the old slogan of "Free Trade," and the picture of colonies as "millstones round our neck" painted by Disraeli were fast being displaced.

The key feature of the age was the trend towards monopoly strengthened by the competition from abroad. This was most evident in the iron and steel industry and in textiles, but became true of the new industries, such as chemical manufacturing and soap and margarine manufacturing. The Levers and Brunner Mond of the late nineteenth century held the seeds of the great Unilever and I.C.I. combines of to-day. Intimately associated with the new concerns were the banks, themselves rapidly becoming monopolised in a few hands. The fusion of industrial and banking capital was the motive power of the new imperialism.

New sources of supply of raw materials were urgently needed to feed the mighty industrial machine that concentration of capital

had made possible. New and more profitable fields of investment than were available in Britain were needed to absorb the immense balances that had been built up. But as capitalism in France and in Germany had after 1880 much the same needs as Britain, a feverish struggle was begun between the great Powers for *exclusive* supplies of raw materials and *exclusive* rights of capital investment. The last years of the nineteenth century constituted the age of Joseph Chamberlain and Cecil Rhodes—the age of the empire-builders, of one of whom, Lord Delamere, we will tell more presently. Britain, first in the field, and possessed of a powerful fleet, came off best in the struggle for colonies. By 1900 the division of the world was complete.

COLONIAL POSSESSIONS[1]

*Million square miles and million inhabitants*

| | *Great Britain* | | *France* | | *Germany* | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | *Area* | *Pop.* | *Area* | *Pop.* | *Area* | *Pop.* |
| 1815–30 | 2 | 126·4 | 0·02 | 0·5 | — | — |
| 1860 | 2·5 | 145·1 | 0·2 | 3·4 | — | — |
| 1880 | 7·7 | 267·9 | 0·7 | 7·5 | — | — |
| 1899 | 9·3 | 309·0 | 3·7 | 56·4 | 1·0 | 14·7 |

Most shameless and greedy was the scramble for Africa. Whereas in 1876 not more than 10·8 per cent. of Africa belonged to the imperialist Powers, within twenty-four years only 9·6 per cent. was not so held.

Britain's reasons for desiring to occupy East Africa were threefold. The first reason was strategic—the safeguarding of the route to India which had materialised with the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869, and the protection of the back door to Egypt. India had become a treasure trove for British investors. Millions of pounds were being drawn out of the country every year in interest on loans. Egypt was the key to the most important waterway in the world. Her cotton plantations had been largely developed with British capital. By 1876 £6,000,000 a year was being paid out in interest on British loans for railways, canals, bridges, etc., built by British contractors.[2] The safeguarding of these two great prizes was of the utmost importance. The second reason was the desire to forestall

[1] *New Data on Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism*, Lenin, p. 172.

[2] *A People's History of England*, A. L. Morton, 1938, p. 461.

any other Power which might exploit any wealth the area might have. As Lenin says: "Finance capital is not only interested in the already known sources of raw materials; it is also interested in potential sources of raw materials because present-day technical development is extremely rapid. . . . Hence, the inevitable striving of finance capital to extend its economic territory and even its territory in general. In the same way that the trusts capitalise their property by estimating it at two or three times its value, taking into account its 'potential' (not present) returns, and the further results of monopoly, so finance capital strives to seize the largest possible amount of land of all kinds and in any place it can, and by any means, counting on the possibilities of finding raw materials there, and fearing to be left behind in the insensate struggle for the last available scraps of undivided territory. . . ."[1]

The third reason, the one given most prominence in the school history books, the abolition of the slave trade, was entirely subsidiary to the first two. The abolition of slavery served more as a pretext for seizing territory than as a primary objective, while the system of forced labour later introduced in Kenya by the British Administration was not much preferable to slavery.

The way in which that part of East Africa which is now called Kenya became a British colony follows the classic African pattern—the use of armed force, the use of missionaries as pawns in the imperialist game, the encouragement of commercial enterprise in the form of a Chartered Company, and the final assumption of full power by the State. After the opening of the Suez Canal, the Sultan of Zanzibar, who controlled an important part of the coast, occupied a key position. The various European Powers quickly established consulates on the island. But in 1873 control of the waters was decided by a force of British warships ostensibly present to prevent trading in slaves.

The next ten years saw the emergence of Germany as an important force in East Africa. Conflict with Britain was avoided by a division of the spoil—the bulk of the Sultan's possessions.[2] Britain's "sphere"

[1] Lenin, *ibid.*, p. 184.

[2] Clauses 2 and 3 of the agreement concluded in 1886 state that "(2) Britain will support German negotiations with the Sultan for the lease of the Customs duties at Dar-es-Salaam and Pangani to the German East Africa Company. (3) The territory between the Rovuma and the Tana Rivers is to be divided into a German and a British 'sphere of influence,' the line between them being drawn from the mouth of the River Umba (near Vanga) to Lake Jipe, and thence between the districts of Chagga and Taveta, to 'the northern base of the Kilimanjaro Range,'

was in 1887 leased to her for £17,000 a year[1] and in 1890 all that was left of the Sultan's possessions was put under a British Protectorate. Germany's "sphere" was sold direct by the Sultan's son to the German Imperial East Africa Company.

The straightforward Germans confined themselves almost entirely to armed bands when "opening up" a prospective colony. The French and especially the British enlisted the support of missionaries, whose work could be at once "protected" by armed force should the indigenous people object to conversion by attacking the missionaries.

The early representatives of British mission societies did valuable work in exploring the hinterland. Rebman reached Lake Victoria. Others penetrated even further into Uganda. Wakefield and New explored the Tana Valley. The Royal Geographical Society kept close touch with the missionaries at every stage. It was, however, only after the commercial possibilities of Uganda were seen that more positive encouragement was given to the missions to carry out work in East Africa. The commercial motive behind this encouragement given to African missions was made clear by H. M. Stanley in a striking passage:

"There are forty million people beyond the gateway to the Congo, and the cotton-spinners of Manchester are waiting to clothe them. Birmingham foundries are glowing with the red metal that will presently be made into ironwork for them and the trinkets that shall adorn those dusky bosoms, and the ministers of Christ are zealous to bring them, the poor benighted heathen, into the Christian fold."[2]

In 1885 a missionary with all his escort was killed by vassals of the Kabaka of Buganda.[3] He was neither the first nor the last. In 1890 a British protectorate was declared over Uganda to "protect the mission."

The British Government did not at first govern directly its protectorates and sphere of influence in East Africa. In 1888 their

and thence to the point at which the 1st degree of south latitude strikes the east side of Lake Victoria. Within these 'spheres' the two Powers agree 'not to make acquisitions of territory except protectorates,' nor to 'interfere' with each other's extension of influence' in its own sphere." R. Coupland, *The Exploitation of East Africa*, p. 474.

[1] Later reduced to £16,000 on the cession of Jubaland to Italy in 1924.

[2] *Man's Worldly Goods*, Huberman, p. 259.

[3] Salvadori, p. 38.

administration was entrusted to a newly formed Chartered Company, the British East Africa Company. The Company, formed with a capital of £500,000, had already concluded treaties with tribal chiefs which gave it a controlling position all along the coast and some considerable distance inland. Now, hoping to realise trading possibilities with Uganda, it undertook the construction of a road from Mombasa to Lake Victoria. Its directors contemplated also the building of a railway, but were unable to finance such a project. The company finally announced its intention of abandoning the territory. The Government, accused of stabbing the missions in the back, revoked the Company's Charter for £250,000. In 1895 the whole of what is now Kenya became a British protectorate. The transfer of the territory to the Foreign Office had, however, little to do with the protection of the missions.

The rush for the last "ownerless" pieces of land was at its height. Exclusive spheres could only be secured for the representatives of the new finance-capitalism, if the whole authority of the State was thrown in behind them.

For the first five years of British administration everything was subordinated to the building of the railway. The reasons were mainly strategic, but grandiose notions of the economic importance of Uganda played their part. The only method of transporting Uganda merchandise to the coast hitherto had been by African porters—a slow method. In 1897 thousands of indentured Indians were brought into the country to help with railway construction. By 1899 the railway had arrived at the Highlands, reaching Nairobi, which became a small settlement town. The railway followed the old Arab caravan route, scarcely touching the African areas, where the inhabitants were completely unaware that anyone but themselves had rights over their land.

These were crucial years which determined the main lines of Kenya's exploitation as a colony. The territory was costly to administer, showing a big deficit each year. In 1896–7 the revenue was £39,186, while the expenditure was £147,640. By 1900–1 revenue had risen to £64,275, but expenditure had also risen to £193,438.[1] The railway alone had cost £5,689,437 by the time it reached Kisumu in 1901. What could make the colony pay? Not the trade from Uganda, which had fallen far short of first expectations. Certainly not the Kenya African subsistence farmers, of whose existence no one seemed to be much aware. Nor had Kenya one

[1] *Ibid.*, pp. 55–6.

product in great demand which could be exploited like the palm oil of West Africa. Some thought that the territory might prove useful for Indian colonisation.[1]

The solution, however, which was to shape the future economy of the country had already been voiced as early as 1893—European settlement in the temperate, fertile regions of the Highlands, building up an export trade based on the exploitation of African labour on European farms and estates. Lord Lugard had written of the suitability of the Highlands for European activity, extolling also the mineral riches to be found in the region.[2] Sir Gerald Portal, sent into Uganda by the British Government in 1893, talked of the area in similar terms. Sir H. H. Johnston, the High Commissioner for Uganda, was even more lavish in his praises. All three expatiated on the fact that settlement in the region would mean no harm to anyone as there were vast stretches of good land completely uninhabited.

The greatest impetus to the plans for White Settlement was given during the administration of Sir Charles Eliot (1901–4). The road had already been cleared in 1899 when the Government decided that the declaration of the protectorate enabled it to claim sovereign rights over all land! Now in 1902 Eliot went further and annulled all previous restrictive ordinances on the acquisition of land (including one which in 1897 had laid down that no land cultivated by Africans or used regularly by them as pasturage should be alienated). By the new decree, a thousand acres could be sold to any person freehold for 2*s.* 8*d.* an acre or leasehold for ninety-nine years at £1 per hundred acres. A tacit convention prevented the sale of farming land to Indians.

In the same year Eliot succeeded in uniting the Eastern province of Uganda with his new province of Kenya, thus bringing all the area suitable for White Settlement under one administration, and in addition introducing a small non-colonisable district containing some million Africans who would be ready to hand as a labour force.

It was Eliot who finally set the stage for white immigration. It was his report[3] which put the official stamp, not only on the conception of immense mineral riches, but on the legend of wide, uninhabited spaces which could be seized without harming the interests of the Africans. "We have in East Africa the rare experience

[1] Salvadori, p. 56.
[2] *The Rise of Our East African Empire*, Captain Fred. Lugard, 1893.
[3] *The East African Protectorate*, Sir C. Eliot, 1905.

of dealing with a *tabula rasa*, an almost untouched and sparsely inhabited country, where we can do as we will, regulate immigration, and open or close the door as seems best."

The argument of wide, empty spaces drew strength first from the fact that the shifting cultivation method of the agricultural tribes and the nomadic cycle of the pastoral tribes left big stretches unoccupied at any given time; second, from the fact that a terrible famine in 1888–9, due to an eighteen months' drought, had killed off large numbers of Africans; and, third, from the fact that much of the land was unsuitable for cultivation—a fact long known to the Africans and only discovered later by the Europeans.

In 1901 there were only thirteen settlers in Kenya. Between May, 1903, and December, 1904, 220,000 acres of land were alienated to 342 people.[1] Many thousands more acres went to speculators, individuals and companies. The East African Syndicate formed in 1903 got 320,000 acres, the Uplands of East Africa Syndicate Limited 350,000 acres, Grogan Forest Concessions 200,000 acres. Lord Delamere—empire-builder and future settlers' leader—got 100,000 acres. Of him Salvadori says: "Lord Delamere did not feel at ease in England; imbued with the feudal spirit, he preferred life in the colonies, where natives could be treated as were, in former days in Europe, the serfs attached to the land. Not being rich enough to live like a great lord in England, he knew that he could do so more easily in Kenya."[2] Soon after securing his concession, the noble lord was busy parcelling it up for resale—at a profit—to incoming settlers.

The tribes meanwhile, bewildered and angry, were realising for the first time that their land was not their own. Scarcely a tribe did not suffer.

The land of the Kikuyu—the most fertile, the best-watered and the nearest to the railway—was raped first. They lost 494,220 acres. One hundred thousand Kikuyu found themselves squatters on European land. Many of the rest were forced through land shortage to become labourers for the new settlers at 3*d*. a day, their children working for ½*d*. a day.

The Kamba lost also: 296,532 acres of their most fertile land was filched.

The Masai lost most of all. They were deprived of their normal grazing land by a series of tricks and broken promises which for brazen impudence can have few parallels in history.

[1] Salvadori, p. 71. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 68.

The Masai territory included a part of the Rift Valley, with some heights on either side. The pasture there was fairly poor, and so the whole area was required for grazing in order that the herds should have sufficient. The territory was believed by the early settlers, however, to be fertile farmland, and among the first concessions of land to be made were some in the Masai country. The Masai, furious, protested so vigorously that the Kenya Government was forced to come to an agreement with them. In 1904 a treaty was signed by which the Masai, while allowing the settlers to cultivate specified parts of their land in the Rift Valley, were to occupy the rest in security. But the settlers, not yet satisfied, had their eyes on the heights of Laikipia—now secured by treaty to the Masai—which they believed to be eminently suitable for cultivation. They demanded the region. In 1911 the Kenya Government turned the Masai out of Laikipia, transferring them to unfavourable regions along the Tanganyika border. The British Government set its seal on the robbery by its condonation of the breaking of the treaty. The efforts of the Masai, who started legal proceedings against the Kenya Government, were doomed to failure.[1] Meanwhile, the "fertility" of Laikipia proved an illusion (as the Masai well knew). It could support only a bare 250 settlers. And in later years the Government had to intervene to resettle at considerable expense some of the colonists who were unable to make a living there.

The necessary corollary of this wholesale alienation of land was the delimitation of reserves into which the Africans could be penned. This policy was proposed by a Local Land Board set up in 1904 and presided over by Lord Delamere. Not only did this help to squeeze out the able-bodied men into wage-earning employment, but made it easier to discriminate in public works, agricultural assistance and social services between the African and settled areas.

Between 1905 and 1914, 4,388,502 acres had been alienated. The settler community, encouraged in every way, had increased from 886 to 5,438. The settlers were mainly English, Irish and Scots, younger sons of noble families, or well-to-do members of the middle classes. There were also, however, about 700 South Africans, mainly Boers, who had been encouraged to settle by a special mission

[1] "The court held that the agreement of 1904 was not a contract, but a treaty, and that treaties entered into by foreign subjects (the technical status of the Masai under the protectorate) were not cognisable in municipal courts. . . . The Masai were given leave to appeal to the Privy Council, but could not afford to pursue it." Hailey, p. 746.

sent during Eliot's time. Canadians, Australians, Americans, Italians, and French made up the rest. These settlers were not pioneers. They did not work with their hands, but depended entirely on a great African labour force.

The capital brought in by the settlers started great economic activity. The Bank of India arrived. Several commercial houses established themselves in Nairobi. All kinds of professional people immigrated to satisfy the settlers' needs. Nairobi grew and prospered. The farmers, their labour force increased by the most despicable means,[1] planted coffee, sisal, cereals, wool and copra. Soon they accounted for half the total value of the country's exports. They bought also the main part of the country's imports. Development was checked to some degree during the Great War, owing to the enlistment of many of the settlers in the armed forces. It was, however, during this same period that steps designed to make settlement even more profitable were taken. The land law of 1915 made possible the concentration of holdings in a few hands by restricting Government control of land transfers. The law granted leases of 999 years (instead of ninety-nine, as formerly) on ridiculously low terms. It also legalised longstanding practice by empowering the Governor to lease or alienate any land belonging to Africans.

The end of the war brought with it a new atmosphere of uneasiness and fear—a panicky realisation that the African who had aimed a rifle at his fellow from Tanganyika could just as easily aim it at a European. A powerful threat to European interests seemed to arise also from the increasing immigration of Indians. The white settlers redoubled their efforts. There is little doubt that in 1920, when the East African Protectorate became the Crown Colony of Kenya, they were in complete control of the country's economy and were seeking new means of increasing their numbers and their power.

[1] See Chapter VII.

CHAPTER III

# HOW KENYA IS GOVERNED

"There shall be no equality between black and white either in Church or State." *Clause from original Constitution of the Transvaal.*

BY the time Kenya was annexed, the apparatus of Crown Colony government had been firmly established throughout the empire. Crown Colony government has its origin in one of the most reactionary periods of British history: the unsuccessful struggle to maintain British rule in America and the war against revolutionary France (1793–1815), which followed within a decade. The first event brought with it the fear of a disintegrating empire. The second secured for Britain, by agreement with the despotic countries of Europe—Russia, Austria and Prussia—a new empire which included Malta, Mauritius, Ceylon, Heligoland and the Cape.

In this period the Colonial Office was founded and the new system of government, designed to keep firm grip on the colonies, was elaborated. The main features of the system were: strict control from London; "government as far as possible under the prerogative without recourse to Parliament";[1] the appointment to each colony of a Governor in whose hands despotic power was concentrated.

The epoch of imperialism saw the consolidation of the main Acts which buttress the government of the colonies: the British Settlements Act, 1887, and the Foreign Jurisdiction Act, 1890. In bestowing immense powers on the Crown, in effect the Colonial Office, by these two Acts, Parliament largely renounced its right to direct control of colonial affairs.[2] And at no time since has Parliament displayed much interest in the many millions of colonial people for whom it is ultimately responsible.

One finds in Kenya the full apparatus of Crown Colony government. There is the Governor who is at once "representative of the King, the head of the executive Government, and usually the

[1] Wight, p. 47.

[2] Orders in Council and letters patent (the main instruments by which colonial constitutions are created) are placed before Parliament if based on statutory law, but not discussed. The laws of Colonial Legislative Councils (confirmed by the Secretary of State), Royal Instructions and Orders in Council based on the royal prerogative, are never placed before Parliament.

President of the Legislature."[1] He governs with the aid of his Civil Servants and two councils, the Executive and the Legislative Councils. The former is the central organ of the colonial government and is usually composed of the senior Civil Servants; the latter is a more representative body designed to permit unofficial representation and more public discussion of measures proposed by the Government.

The system has had no smooth course in Kenya. No sooner had the first landlords staked their claims (on land given to them by a Government to whom it did not belong) than Britain was faced with demands for a share in political power. The constitutional history of Kenya has been shaped by this conflict—the British Government intent on retaining the colony as a key imperial point, and the settlers' leaders no less intent on winning full political control on the South African model.

A brief examination of the separate elements of the Kenya administrative machine will make the position clear.

Consider, first, the Governor. Kenya's Governors have been mainly noted for their political spinelessness (often combined with a distinguished military record) or strong reactionary views. Of Sir Charles Eliot (1901–4) we have already written. Sir James Hayes-Sadler (1905–9), "a peace-loving man who had no wish to become involved in any unpleasantness," was christened "Flannel-foot" by the settlers and run out of the country.[2] Sir Percy Girouard (1909–12), one of "Milner's young men," whose propensity for promising away large areas of Kenya brought him into conflict with the Colonial Office, resigned to become a managing director of Armstrong-Vickers. Sir Edward Northey (1919–22) developed a system which Lord Delamere christened "government by agreement"—agreement, that is, with the settlers. Sir Edward Grigg (1925–30)—now Lord Altrincham—became subsequently a director of Cook's Tourist Agency and Tory M.P. for Altrincham.

The Governor, usually appointed for a period of five years, depends largely on his permanent Civil Servants, headed by the Chief Secretary. These officials, drawn in the main from upper- and middle-class families, and educated at British public schools and universities, are closely linked in class outlook to the settlers. It would be surprising if many of them were not sympathetic to the aims of the latter. They work beside an increasing number of officials drawn from settler families. They mix in the same social

[1] Wight, p. 144. [2] For full story, see Huxley, Vol. I, pp. 226–37.

world. When they retire they are encouraged to acquire property and become permanent residents themselves.

The Governor is assisted by his Executive Council. A body of great importance, it makes policy and shapes the legislation to be put before the Legislative Council. It is the authority on all disciplinary questions relating to the Colonial Service in the territory. For these reasons, when an Executive Council was set up in Kenya in 1905 it was purely official. But the settlers' leaders were dissatisfied, and by 1919 won the right of admission to the Executive Council for two European unofficial members of the Legislative Council. In 1921 an Indian was admitted, followed in 1923 by one further European to represent African interests. The balance, however, still lay with the officials, who had eight seats to the unofficials' four. This balance was upset by a bargain in 1937 arrived at, as usual, over the heads of the Africans and Asians. The settlers agreed to the imposition of a light income tax on condition that Europeans would not be asked to contribute to an extension of African services, and that the number of officials on the Executive Council would be reduced to four.[1] The two European unofficials on the Executive Council are by convention the leader of the elected Europeans in the Legislative Council, and one of the members for Nairobi. This means, as one writer says, the introduction of the leaders of the opposition into the councils of the Cabinet.[2] "The nominated members are under no obligation to support the government and in fact frequently oppose it in the Legislative Council. The presence in the executive council, the proceedings of which are confidential, of a member who may be elected to the Legislature as a professed opponent of government policy, is a peculiarity which is confined to the Constitution of Kenya."[3] Despite this peculiarity, settlers and officials on the Executive Council seem to have had no serious disagreements.[4]

The centre of the constitutional struggle has been the Legislative Council, which is "empowered, subject to any limitations prescribed by Order in Council or Royal Instructions, to pass such ordinances, and to constitute such courts and officers for the ad-

[1] Cf. Hailey, p. 138, and Wight, p. 132.

[2] Wight, p. 132.

[3] Hailey, p. 166.

[4] "... During the whole of the time I have sat as a member, I have never known one occasion on which the officials have voted one way and the unofficials another. ..." Mr. Surridge, Acting Chief Secretary, K.L.C., July 18th, 1946.

ministration of justice, 'as may be necessary for the peace, order and good government of the colony.'"[1] Three main groups sit in the Legislative Council: the *ex-officio* officials (members of the E.C. and certain others), nominated officials appointed by the Governor for special reasons and unofficials who are elected, or nominated by the Governor.

When the first Legislative Council was set up in 1907, it contained six officials and two (later four) nominated Europeans. But the settlers were soon agitating for a greater share of power through Lord Delamere's Convention of Associations, which became known as the "unofficial Parliament." The First World War brought the settlers their first major political victory. In 1919, when the European population numbered only some 9,000, they received the right to elect eleven representatives to the Legislative Council. The Government, nevertheless, took the precaution of increasing the number of officials.

Meanwhile the Indian population in Kenya demanded equal rights with the Europeans, whom they outnumbered. "India, the brain-centre, was stirred by the post-war spirit of self-determination, discontent and unrest. Kenya, the distant muscle, twitched in response."[2] With the delicate situation in India created by British wartime promises, it appeared possible to the Europeans that the demands of the Indians, a common electoral roll and freedom of immigration, would be granted by the British Government.

The settlers prepared for action. Already in 1921 the Convention of Associations had set up a Vigilantes Committee to advise on any action to be taken over the Indian question. When it seemed that the Indian demands might be granted, the Vigilantes Committee began to organise "an emergency military and political machine. . . . In each district a census of rifles, ammunition, cars, patrol supplies and horses was taken. Plans of mobilisation were worked out to the last detail. . . . Plans were drawn up to seize, by surprise raids, the railway and the postal and telegraphic systems. Trained telegraphists were detailed to take over immediately the signal was given. . . . The Governor was to be kidnapped and taken to a lonely farm some sixty miles from Nairobi, where a guard had been detailed to look after him. . . ."[3]

This "Ulster" rebellion proved unnecessary. The British Government dropped its proposals; the Highlands had once again been made safe for Europeans and a common roll avoided. A communal

[1] Wight, p. 152. [2] Huxley, Vol. II, p. 111. [3] *Ibid.*, pp. 135-6.

roll was put in its place, with provision for only five elected Indians.[1]

It is worth noting that Delamere and his associates were solidly backed by the Governor, Sir Robert Coryndon (even though they had planned to kidnap him). When the settlers went to put their case to him on one occasion, he replied: "Gentlemen, you may remember that I am South African born."[2] He is said to have been "well acquainted with the structure of the rebel army."[3] None of the "rebels," however, was punished, detained or deported. Yet Harry Thuku, an African, was detained for years without trial because of his agitation (about the same time) against forced labour, high taxation and other grievances.

In 1927 a new Constitution was given to the Legislative Council by Royal Instructions, and is the one in force to-day. Official membership is composed of eleven *ex-officio* and nine nominated members (one to represent Arab interests). Unofficial membership is composed of eleven elected Europeans, five elected Indians, one elected Arab, and two persons nominated to represent African interests.

"European elected members" is perhaps a misnomer, since registered voters are only a small percentage of the 22,000 people who form the European community. In the "General Election" of 1944, seven members were returned unopposed. Several did not even bother to publish election addresses. The total number of votes cast was 1,465.[4]

Who are these European elected members? They are not the simple soldier-settlers of propaganda fame, but are among the real rulers of the colony. A brief description of their economic interests will give more insight than quotations from speeches.

Mrs. Watkins (Kiambu) is a big coffee-grower. Mr. F. J. Couldrey (member for Nyanza until his death in 1946) was the founder and Editor of the *Kenya Weekly News*, a past President of the Nakuru Chamber of Commerce, and Chairman of both the Pyrethrum and Wheat Boards. Mr. W. G. Nicol (the member for Mombasa) is

[1] In his *Government of the British Empire*, pp. 202–3, A. B. Keith, well-known authority on constitutional problems, has described this communal representation introduced in Kenya as a perversion—directed towards discriminating against a weaker community. The Europeans, though only half as numerous as the Indians, received twice as many seats. Cf. also Wight, p. 89.

[2] Huxley, Vol. II, p. 156. [3] *Ibid.*, p. 140.

[4] *E.A. and Rh.*, October 5th, 1944.

a partner in the firm of Smith, Mackenzie & Co., and its East African managing director. In addition, he is a director of the African Wharfage Co., the African Marine and General Engineering Co., and the Kenya Landing and Shipping Company. He acts as liaison officer between the elected members' organisation and the Association of Chambers of Commerce and Industry of East Africa. He finds time to be a member of the Standing Finance Committee also. Major Joyce (Ukamba) is Chairman of the Kenya Dairy Association and of the board of the Kenya Stockowners' Association. He is a member of the Appeal Board set up under the Land and Water Preservation Ordinance and was on the Machakos District Manpower Committee during the war. The member for Uasin-Gishu, Mr. Bouwer, is a director of the Kenya Farmers' Association (K.F.A.). Major Keyser (Trans-Nzoia) is also a member of the K.F.A. Mr. Trench (Rift Valley) is a big farmer in wheat and pyrethrum as well as a member of the Pyrethrum Board and Chairman of the K.F.A. The member for Aberdare, Mr. Wright, has been for many years agent to Lord Egerton of Tatton, a big landowner. Leader of the elected members and member for Nairobi South is Mr. (now Sir) A. Vincent, a managing director of Motor Mart and Exchange Limited and other companies. One member alone appears to be without big business or farming interests—Mr. S. V. Cooke, member for the Coast and a retired Civil Servant.

The five elected representatives of the 70,000 Indians are mainly drawn from professional and business circles. The small Arab community elects one of its two members.

But what of the nearly 4 million Africans? In 1946 they remain without a single elected representative on the Legislative Council. Until 1934 they were represented by a single nominated missionary. From 1934 to 1945 they were represented by two nominated Europeans.[1] Not until 1945 was an African (Mr. Eliud Mathu) nominated as one of the representatives of African interests.

The full measure of the settlers' political power cannot be gauged by their numbers on the Legislative Council or even on the Executive Council. Although the British Government has so far made an unofficial European majority impossible, there are other methods by which their power is exercised. First and foremost is the Standing

[1] One of these representatives, a former Chief Native Commissioner, stated: "I should imagine that eventually there will be Africans sitting on this Council. Personally, I should have thought the time has not yet come. . . ." Mr. Montgomery, K.L.C., April 22nd, 1942.

Finance Committee, which scrutinises and amends the Budget. This has had a European unofficial majority since 1926. Secondly, there are the many Advisory Committees set up to study and make recommendations on particular problems. It is customary for these committees, too, to have an unofficial European majority. Most serious of all has been the reorganisation of Administration, which took place in 1945. During the war years a whole series of boards and committees were set up, with strong representation of and sometimes headed by European unofficials. This integration of unofficials with the administrative apparatus has now been legalised. The Departments have been grouped under members of the Executive Council and authority given for unofficial Europeans to take charge of such groups if the Governor desires. The first result of this reorganisation has been to grant the settlers a fifteen-year-old demand—namely, "that one of the unofficial members of the Legislative Council should be appointed as a member for Agriculture."[1] In 1945, in spite of grave protests from Indians and Africans, Major Cavendish-Bentinck, former settlers' leader with interests in various companies, was appointed Member for Agriculture, Animal Husbandry and Natural Resources. An extra seat was thus won by the settlers on the official bench.

## Local Government—European

In the towns and settled areas of Kenya, there are organs of local government which give the settlers considerable power. Local government in Britain is generally regarded as an important sphere of democracy. In Kenya it is no more democratic than the Roman system, whereby the rights of freemen were exercised over a great body of slaves.

Drawing on South African experience, the main structure of local government was erected in 1928. It falls into two categories—the urban and the rural. In the urban category there are four municipal boards (Mombasa, Nakuru, Kisumu and Eldoret); and one municipal council (Nairobi). Dealing with these municipalities is a Standing Committee for Local Government, on which prominent members of the Legislative Council are represented. In the rural category are seven District Councils (Nakuru, Uasin Gishu, Trans Nzoia, Naivasha, Nairobi, Aberdare and Nyanza). Dealing with the District Councils is a Standing Committee for Rural Areas, on

[1] Huxley, Vol. II, p. 263.

which further members of the Legislative Council are represented.[1]

The municipalities have much the same general powers as have local government organs in Britain. They have town-planning powers, are responsible for public health, public works and so on. The most important municipality—Nairobi—has had elected European representatives from its foundation. Indian representatives were at first nominated and only later allowed to be elected. The European naturally outnumbered the Indian councillors. Far more numerous in Nairobi than the European and Indian communities combined is the African community without whose labour the city would come to a standstill. Until recently the Council had no African members. At last, in June, 1946, two Africans were *nominated* by the Governor as members of the Council. The Member for Health and Local Government, introducing the Bill to provide for these nominations, made it clear that the Africans need not hope that nomination would soon be superseded by election. "There is no practicable means now within sight, or likely to materialise in any time we need think of for the moment, for bringing in a system of elections."[2]

The Europeans, however, have taken no chances, and the same Bill which provided for two nominated Africans provided for the appointment of seven aldermen—the majority of whom will be Europeans, of course—who will sit for six years!

The four municipal boards make provision for European and Indian representation, but not for African representation (except in Mombasa, where an African has replaced a nominated Indian).

The Government provides a good part of the revenue of the municipalities. In 1936 the Government was paying half the cost of public health services in Nairobi, while also contributing to the salaries of public health and municipal staff and to road upkeep.[3] In 1940 the proportion of Government grants to total revenue was: Nairobi, 28 per cent.; Mombasa, 53 per cent.; Nakuru, 18 per cent.; Eldoret, 17 per cent. The rates are negligible. In Nairobi it is 1½ per cent. on unimproved site values.[4]

The District Councils (which similarly make no provision for African representation) are mainly concerned with the upkeep of roads. But extensive powers have also been given to them to

[1] The Earl of Erroll, well-known Mosley Fascist, was a member of this Committee.

[2] Mr. C. E. Mortimer, K.L.C., February 15th, 1946.

[3] Pim, pp. 189–90.

[4] *Local Government Report*, 1943.

prescribe the terms on which Africans are allowed to remain on land within their area of jurisdiction.

Two-thirds of the total revenue of these councils comes direct from the Government, the balance from licences, etc. For many years attempts have been made by the Government to persuade the Councils to impose a rate on local residents. Every attempt has met with failure. Even when the principle was at last accepted, a Conference of District Councils in 1943 demanded as a condition that the Government take responsibility for bringing district roads up to a standard of construction adequate to meet the demands of post-war traffic. The "Conference also emphasised that before rating was adopted, councils would desire to have some clear indication of the extent to which the Government would be prepared to share in the cost of the additional services which could then be undertaken."[1]

The Africans have been denied rights of citizenship in the settled areas. Their elementary rights as human beings have been no less disregarded.

"It is regrettable to have to report that the worst housing in Kenya is in Nairobi, and during the year conditions, far from improving, became worse. . . . The conditions under which natives live in Nairobi are deplorable, and overcrowding in the quarters provided by the Municipal Council must be seen to be believed. One native witness stated that his contract with the accused was for pay, food and housing, and that he had slept in the premises complained of with twenty others for three days and then declined to do so any longer, as he and the other inmates were being bitten by parasites. The Chief Sanitary Inspector, Medical Department, who had visited the premises, said the structure was made out of all sorts of things such as old tins, old pieces of corrugated iron and stone. It consisted of three rooms of the average height of 4 ft. 6 in., one 8 ft. by 9 ft., another 6 ft. by 7 ft., and the other 8 ft. by 6 ft. There was no chimney, no latrine accommodation and no window. Mr. Ling described the housing as the worst that he had ever seen during his fifteen years' experience. The Principal Labour Officer concurred with this view, and added that when he visited the premises one room was occupied by four goats, which were tethered, and that the floor was covered with urine, manure and pools of water. The magistrate, in acquitting the accused on the grounds that a Municipal by-law overruled the Employment of Natives Ordinance, remarked

[1] *Local Government Report*, p. 2.

that but for this he would have imposed an exemplary sentence, as the premises were not fit for a pig to live in.

"Frequent representations have been made by the Principal Labour Officer to the Medical Officer of Health, Nairobi, but so far the result has been nil. Even a request to the Council that the by-law be altered has met with no success."[1]

The Mombasa slums are worse, if anything. The servants of the dairy-owners sleep among the cattle, and a cramped dirty room in a hut carries a rental not less than 5sh a month.[2] Similar conditions are to be found throughout the settled areas.

The main features of this sham local government now stand out clearly. The settlers have reversed a famous slogan. They have for many years enjoyed representation without taxation. And the Africans, *who form the majority in the settled areas, as elsewhere*, have been denied any effective voice in the matters which most intimately concern them.

### Local Government—African

Whereas every form of Government assistance has been given to European local government, the most serious obstacles have been placed in the way of a similar development among Africans.

When the British occupation of Kenya began, such tribal authorities as existed were virtually eliminated. The British arbitrarily created headmen and chiefs paid by and owing allegiance to them. Various ordinances[3] gave increasing powers to these headmen. They were to "maintain law and order," and were empowered to conscript free labour for communal purposes. They could prevent a meeting of more than five persons if it "might tend to be subversive of peace and good order." One of their main duties was to prevent tax evasion—a task which led some to use coercive measures and take bribes. This system, so obviously alien to any democratic principle, was maintained in its entirety until 1924.

The growing discontent of the Africans forced the Government to create Local Native Councils.[4] These did not replace the headman system, but co-existed and interlocked with it. In many cases existing headmen were appointed to the L.N.C.

[1] *Native Affairs Report*, 1937, pp. 215–16.

[2] *Report of the Commission of Inquiry appointed to Examine the Labour Conditions in Mombasa*, 1939, p. 8.

[3] Village Headmen Ordinance, 1902; Native Authority Ordinance, 1912.

[4] Native Authority (Amendment) Ordinance, 1924; slightly changed by an ordinance of 1926 which repealed it.

A Local Native Council is set up by the Governor-in-Council. It consists of the District Commissioner as chairman and his assistant, together with such Africans as the Governor may approve on the D.C.'s recommendation. Half the Africans are directly appointed. The rest may be nominated by meetings of African male adults who indicate their choice. They may be appointed if recommended by the D.C. and approved by the Governor.

Nominally L.N.Cs. may make and pass resolutions "on any matters affecting purely local native administration." (These matters include food and water supplies, forests, outspans, roads, bridges, and culverts, public health, etc.) In effect, it is impossible for the L.N.C. to do much without the approval of the District Commissioner, and in the more backward areas the L.N.C. becomes merely the D.C.'s "rest-chair," as the Africans themselves express it!

The Local Native Councils receive no grants from the Government, as do the European councils. They receive no refund of Government taxes, as in Tanganyika, where the proportion of tax returned is about 25 per cent.[1] They get no basic road grants. For every service they desire, fresh sacrifices must be asked of the already overtaxed inhabitants of their areas. They must pay for the upkeep of all elementary and day primary schools in their areas, as the Government does not maintain the school system for Africans as it does for Europeans. Their balances, however small, are liable to be eaten up by local famine relief needs. In 1935, during the famine in Kitui, the Government announced that no allotment from Government funds would be made while any unexpended balances remained in the funds of the L.N.C. The result of this policy is "that the more liable a district is to famine, and consequently the more it needs the development of its water supplies and agricultural resources, the less will be the proportion of resources available for such purposes."[2]

After building up a reserve of approximately £20,000 annually up to 1930, the total L.N.C. budget could scarcely be balanced in 1931, had a deficit in 1932, just balanced in 1933, and had deficits in 1934 and 1935, only recovering in 1936. They face to-day a far greater financial crisis as the demand for services increases.

The Local Native Councils are undemocratic. They have no real power and are financially crippled.

[1] Pim, p. 107. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 110.

In Kenya to-day the distinction between European unofficial and European official is weakening. Britain, while in no way intending to relinquish her hold on Kenya, is prepared to give the settlers an increasing share of political and economic power in the territory, on the understanding that they fall in line with imperial policy. The result is that the big landlords and business men who represent the settlers on the Legislative and Executive Councils, and wield the power on the Standing Finance and Advisory Committee and in local government, now take their place in the apparatus of Government. Kenya is run as a private corporation, with themselves as the directors. The demands of the Africans are ignored or repressed. This is the explanation of the disastrous situation outlined in the rest of this book.

CHAPTER IV

# THE AFRICAN PEASANT AND HIS LAND

LIKE all colonies, Kenya is an overwhelmingly agrarian country. Of her entire population, 95·6 per cent. are dependent on agriculture for a livelihood. The following table compares Kenya with the formerly most backward countries in Europe, as well as with Denmark and England and Wales.

TABLE I

*Population dependent on Agriculture*

| | *Date* | *Population* '000 | *Population dependent on Agriculture* '000 | *Per cent.* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Kenya . . . | 1945 | 3,825 | 3,657 | 95·6 |
| Albania . . | 1930 | 1,003 | 800 | 80·0 |
| Yugoslavia . . | 1931 | 13,934 | 10,629 | 76·0 |
| Bulgaria . . | 1926 | 5,479 | 4,088 | 75·0 |
| Roumania . . | 1930 | 18,057 | 13,069 | 72·0 |
| Denmark . . | 1930 | 3,551 | 1,061 | 30·0 |
| England and Wales . | 1931 | 39,952 | 2,117 | 5·0 |

European figures from *Economic Demography of Eastern and South-Eastern Europe*, 1945.

Two systems of agriculture live side by side in Kenya—though uneasily. There is, first, the capitalist farming practised by 2,000 or so European farmers and plantation managers employing over 100,000 Africans, apart from squatters and daily-paid workers. Secondly, there is the predominantly subsistence farming of the African peasants. The first does not help the second, but tends to stifle it. We have described how the Europeans became landowners and farmers. Now we must describe the situation of the African peasantry, who constitute more than 95 per cent. of the population.

## DIET AND PRODUCTION

What is the standard of living of the African peasantry, and what do they eat? The Kikuyu and the Masai exemplify the agricultural and pastoral tribes respectively.

The Kikuyu diet has been described as follows: "White maize, unripe bananas, potatoes and some beans, cooked and eaten as a mixture, form the mainstay of their principal meal of the day. Some gruel in the morning, most often made with maize, has to sustain them until evening. Millet sometimes takes the place of maize in the gruel; but the use of this millet is going out of fashion. Meat is so infrequently eaten by the masses that the intake is considered negligible."[1] Among the urban Kikuyu the diet is even more monotonous.

The Masai, on the contrary, eat mainly meat and milk, and sometimes the blood of their livestock, though they now eat more maize than they did. Experts consider that their diet contains too much protein and not enough carbohydrate and roughage.

Nutrition reports explode the fallacy that the typical African is a great, hulking, robust creature, and that he can live well on a handful of maize meal. The agricultural and many of the pastoral tribes are seriously undernourished. "Common among the Kikuyu were bony deformities, dental caries, anæmia, pulmonary conditions and tropical ulcers."[2] Tubercular infection "is now widespread throughout the colony," says the Medical Officer in his Report for 1944.

The effects of malnutrition are seen in the appalling infantile mortality rate, which some estimate at 400 to 500 among the Kikuyu and Masai, falling to the "low" figure of 100 among the Digo on the coast.

The most recent census of African agriculture was taken in 1930, and we use it in order to present a more precise picture of food- and land-shortage in Kenya.

Table 2 below presents in its second column a scale proposed by Dr. Harvey (Kenya biochemist)[3] to meet the basic needs of the African. The third column is the scale of rations actually in use for Askari; the fourth is an estimate by Mr. Fazan, an officer of the Kenya Administration, made in 1932 of what the Kikuyu really eat. The last column is an analysis of the calories actually available on the basis of African production in 1930.

[1] C. R. Philip, *E.A.M.J.*, July, 1943.

[2] *Information regarding Nutrition in the Colonial Empire*, 1939, Cmd. 6051.

[3] Cf. Harvey, *E.A.M.J.*, July, 1943.

TABLE 2

*Diet Scales and Production*

| Food | *Harvey's proposed scale* Daily, oz. | Yearly, lb. | *African soldiers' actual scale* Daily, oz. | Yearly, lb. | *Fazan's estimate of what is eaten* Daily, oz. | Yearly, lb. | *Available on 1930 production* Daily, oz. | Yearly, lb. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Maize | 12 | 274 | 16 | 365 | 5·33 | 121·5 | 4 | 92·4 |
| Wimbi | 4 | 91 | — | — | 0·88 | 20·25 | 4·5 | 106 |
| Rice | — | — | 4 | 92 | — | — | — | — |
| Pulses | 1 | 23 | 2·6 | 60 | 2·6 | 6·0 | 2·6 | 60 |
| Roots[1] | 3·5 | 80 | 2 | 46 | 10·5 | 240 | 12 | 274 |
| Vegetables | 3 | 69 | 4 | 92 | — | — | — | — |
| Oranges | — | — | 3 | 69 | — | | | |
| Bananas[3] | — | — | — | — | 10·5 | 240 | 1·2 | 28 |
| Sugar | 1·5 | 34 | 2 | 46 | 2 | 46 | 0·5 | 11·5 |
| Ghee | 1 | 23 | 1 | 23 | — | — | — | — |
| Meat | 4 | 91 | 8 | 182 | —[1] | — | —[2] | — |
| Milk | ⅞ pts. | 40 galls. | — | — | —[1] | — | —[2] | — |
| Tea | ¼ oz. | 6·5 | 0·5 | 11·5 | — | — | — | — |
| Salt | — | — | 0·5 | 11·5 | — | — | — | — |
| | Calories, 2,873 | | Calories, 2,843 | | Calories, 1,732 | | Calories, 1,471 | |

Even the Fazan estimate shows a deficiency in diet of approximately 600 calories if compared with the Harvey scale.

## POPULATION AND PRODUCTIVITY

To help analyse the causes of this low standard of life, we have constructed in Table 3 a comparison between density and productivity in selected African areas of Kenya as compared with selected European countries.

[1] If to the Fazan scale we add his figure of 0·26 pints of milk and 1.4 oz. of meat that increases his calory total by 190 to 2,018.

Fazan bases his estimate of possible consumption of meat and milk on the production capacity of 109,036 cows, 64,974 calves and other cattle and 286,032 sheep and goats for a population of 397,091.

[2] If we add 0·65 pints of milk and 4 oz. of meat, the calory total becomes 2,246. This is based on *possible* production of total stock for total population of Kenya in 1930, calculated on what Fazan estimates *could* be produced by the stock of a given population in Kikuyu proper.

[3] Bananas, roots, etc., have been taken at the caloric value of potatoes.

TABLE 3

*Population and Productivity*[1]

| | *Agric. pop. per 100 acres of agric. area* | *Agric. pop. per 100 acres arable land* | *Yield maize and wheat bags per acre (200 lb.)* | *Production per head of agric. pop. of maize and wheat bags (200 lb.)* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Poland | 33·1 | 51·0 | 4·62 | 6·16 |
| Czechoslovakia | 22·5 | 35·1 | 7·7 | 11·0 |
| Austria | 17·1 | 37·6 | 7·8 | 10·7 |
| Hungary | 25·1 | 32·3 | 6·5 | 14·5 |
| Roumania | 25·7 | 38 | 4·9 | 9·6 |
| Yugoslavia | 30·8 | 53·8 | 6·2 | 8·5 |
| Bulgaria | 40·4 | 46·1 | 5·2 | 8·0 |
| Greece | 36·8 | 49·3 | 3·49 | 4·4 |
| France | 18·3 | 30·4 | (wheat) 6·5 | NA |
| | | | *Maize, millets, pulses* | *Maize, millets, pulses* |
| *Kenya:*[2] | | | | |
| Kavirondo | 22·5 | 153·8[3] | 3·10 | 1·67 |
| Kikuyu | 19·7 | 104·0[4] | 2·98 | 1·72 |
| Kamba | 6·7 | 192·0 | 3·22 | 1·31 |
| Coast | 7·8 | 188·0 | 3·22 | 0·59 |

The table raises two important points: first, that African productivity is lower than the lowest in Europe; secondly, that even assuming African productivity were to rise by 30 or 50 per cent. there would still be serious congestion on the land. In fact, since 1930 yields appear to have declined while the population has increased by some 30 per cent.

## NUTRITION AND LAND DISTRIBUTION

A simple way of grasping Kenya's agrarian problem is to compare the present output with that required for a decent diet. Let us

[1] The figures for European countries are calculated from tables in *Economic Development of South-eastern Europe*, P.E.P., 1945.

[2] The Kavirondo and Kikuyu reserves are the main African agricultural areas. In all four, however, "agricultural area" has been equated with the actual area of the reserves. Production and yields for Kenya calculated from the 1930 Census.

[3] Figures for arable land and population taken from 1930 Agricultural Census.

[4] The discrepancy between this figure and that for the Kavirondo points to an overestimate in the 1930 Census of area actually cultivated.

examine the implications for land distribution. Here is Dr. Harvey's proposed diet, which closely corresponds with that recommended by the United Nations Conference on Food and Agriculture.

TABLE 4

*Diet proposed by Dr. Harvey for Africans*

| *Food groups* | *Lb. per person per year* |
|---|---|
| Maize and wimbi | 365 |
| Milk (galls.) | 40 |
| Roots | 80 |
| Pulses | 23 |
| Leafy, green, yellow vegetables | 69 |
| Meat | 91 |
| Sugar | 34 |
| Ghee | 23 |
| Tea | 6¼ |

Assuming a grain yield per acre of 3 bags (200 lb.) and taking into account the stock carrying capacity of the land, we would require the following distribution to produce the above diet for a family of five under present-day conditions:

| | |
|---|---|
| Grains: (*a*) For human food | 3 acres |
| (*b*) For stock food | 9 acres |
| | 12 acres |
| Meadow, pasture and fodder crops | 15 acres |
| Root crops, vegetables, fruit and sugar cane | 0·50 acres |
| Total | 27·50 acres[1] |

(*Note:* The stock required to produce the necessary quantities of milk, meat and ghee is estimated at four cows, four oxen and ten sheep or goats. With the present standards of animal husbandry and quality of stock this is not a high estimate. The acreage for fodder pasture is on the basis of one acre pasture per head (five sheep counting as one ox) and 5 acres of fodder crops. This figure, too, is on the low side. The grain grown for stock would allow for the feeding of 1½ lb. of grain per head per day. In addition to being a source of meat the oxen might also do some work. Ghee production would require approximately 240 galls. bringing total milk production up to 430 galls. per year.)

[1] One writer gives 11·5 acres as the minimum holding necessary to produce Harvey's diet for a family of 5·69. But this is based on maize yields 30–50 per cent. higher than they are and allows only 5 acres for permanent grazing. Even the writer suggests that probably this is too low. Cf. Humphrey, *Land and Population in S. Nyeri*, 1945.

27·5 acres per family of five would allow a density of 116 per square mile. In fact, Kenya densities are very much higher in the agricultural areas. In 1933 the Kavirondo Reserve, it was noted by the Carter Commission, had an overall density of 145 per square mile. Averages, however, are misleading, and in parts (as at Bunyore) the density rose to 1,200 per square mile. In the Kiambu, Fort Hall and Nyeri districts of Kikuyu the overall density was 283 per square mile. An examination of the S. Nyeri district showed a density of 542 in 1944, which, given the same rate of increase, would rise to 674 in 1955.[1] It must be remembered that since 1933 the population of Kenya is estimated to have increased by the best part of a million, or 30 per cent.

An administrative officer, in a memorandum on the Central Kavirondo,[2] estimated that the average family comprised 5·36 persons and had 16·19 acres available. The same officer reckoned that on an average 19 per cent. (in fact, varying between 50 per cent. and 2 per cent.) was uncultivable. The 16 or so acres were distributed as follows:

| | |
|---|---|
| Under crops . . . . . | 1·11 |
| Necessarily fallow . . . | 0·27 |
| Stock feed . . . . . | 0·50 |
| Homestead . . . . . | 0 10 |
| Grazing commonage . . . | 14·0 |

Once again averages do not give a true picture since there are very many holdings of less than 3 acres. The most recent estimates showed in S. Nyeri 6·71 acres available for an average family of 5·69, but, since only half of the area was suitable for arable purposes, the area available for crops and grass leys was 3·35 acres.[3]

In the pastoral areas, though the density is far less, the number of acres becomes no criterion of the carrying capacity of the land. With the exception of the Masai, all reports speak of serious erosion and "overstocking," a question with which we deal later.

## Consequences of Land Shortage

Given present standards of cultivation, the Africans, it is plain, have not enough land to produce the food they require. But this land shortage (or overpopulation) has other consequences. The old methods of shifting cultivation which allowed land to go back to grass and bush for considerable periods and so regain its fertility are

[1] Humphrey, *op. cit.*

[2] Mr. A. S. Hartley, Carter Report, Vol. 3, p. 2,218.

[3] Humphrey, *op. cit.*

no longer possible. To provide even the minimum of food, the land must be kept continually under crop. The land becomes exhausted. The yields decline. In the absence of rotation, without grass and heavy manuring, continued cropping of grains breaks down the granular structure of the soil (its crumb structure), decreases its water-holding capacity and when the rains come, the top layer of soil is washed away. To make up for the poor yields, steep slopes and hillsides are cultivated, only to result in more soil wash and gullying, which spreads the damage to the areas below.

Shortage of land means less pasturage for stock, and overgrazing adds its quota to the damage. The herbage is given no chance to grow; it dries out, leaving the soil unprotected to the action of the rain and the resultant soil wash. On a well-established sward, experiments show that the amount of run-off water under given conditions is 15 per cent., as against 54 per cent. for bare, unprotected soils. This run-off water is lost to crop growth, does not replenish springs and wells, but damages all in its path and leads to disastrous floods.

These consequences of land shortage are serious enough. They have been made even more serious by the pressure on the part of the Agricultural Department to grow cash crops, such as maize and wattle bark. The African was encouraged to plant his maize in plots by itself and keep it clean-weeded in order to obtain higher yields. By this method of planting and without a strict rotational cropping system, the soil soon lost its stability and began to erode. It has now been realised that the African's own methods were far more sound. He would interplant maize and beans with sweet potatoes, the latter having a heavy-growing, spreading vine. As the grain crops were taken off the land so the sweet potato vine would spread, giving much better protection to the soil.

In the case of wattle, the African could rarely spare land except on steep slopes, and since wattle will not allow anything to grow beneath it the ground was again bared to the eroding action of rain and wind.

At certain times, the Africans were encouraged to grow cash crops, so that they might, in certain products such as wattle, make a contribution to the colony's exports and be able to earn money with which to pay taxes and buy simple manufactures.

Inadequate thought was given to substituting better methods of cropping, etc., and the amount gained by export has been lost many times over by the decline of fertility and the actual loss of soil.

Simple arithmetic also shows that the African needs practically all his land (under present economic conditions) to produce his own food and courts famine by putting aside land for cash crops.

Though taxation and land shortage have compelled (as planned) increasing numbers of African males to leave their homesteads and go to work for Europeans, the effect has been not to relieve the pressure on the soil, but in fact to intensify it. First, the African labourer must leave his family in the reserve whether he wishes it or not, since his wages scarcely suffice for his own support. In fact for several months in the year the labour of his family helps to feed him. Secondly, the absence of so many adult males (who normally do the heavy tasks, such as draining and fencing) means that these jobs essential to good farming are neglected and poor farming methods add to the erosion.

Here is a description of the result: "The reserve [Machakos, S.A.] as shown to me was a most distressing sight. It was a shambles—the result of land mismanagement and misuse. Most of the topsoil had gone and the subsoil was rapidly following suit. Sheet erosion and gully erosion were eating away the land in almost every direction. The grass cover had almost entirely disappeared and relics were to be seen only in spots where it had received some protection. Thickets of thorn and other unpalatable shrub were a feature on old worn-out lands and thornbush generally was invading the reserve."[1]

"Already eighteen districts in Kenya itself are receiving famine relief";[2] the entire district of Machakos has been placed "on the dole," to use the words of a high official;[3] Government experts consider that in one district alone 200,000 people must be moved out, stool, hoe and pot, and the land closed for at least five years to all cultivation and stock.[4]

What the Administration's own figures have proved as long ago as 1930 becomes a matter of surprise in 1945! ". . . The cereal position in East Africa is that we have underestimated consumption or we have not realised the extent to which consumption is going up, and the true fact is that consumption has increased beyond production, and it seems that to-day, if weather conditions are favourable throughout the East African territories—and they never are—we

[1] Dr. I. B. Pole-Evans, South African grass expert, in his *Report on a Visit to Kenya*, 1939.

[2] Col. C. E. Ponsonby, M.P., *Hansard*, July 9th, 1946.

[3] Cf. section on Land Tenure.

[4] Cf. vivid description by Elspeth Huxley in *The Times*, March 25th–26th, 1946.

can only just grow enough to satisfy the needs of our population." Thus Major Cavendish-Bentinck, former settlers' leader and now Member for Agriculture.[1]

### Policies and Solutions

What can be done? Three policies stand out: first, to improve productivity; secondly, to give the African more land and so extend the area of cultivation; thirdly, the building up of a balanced economy and expanding the internal market by developing industry and services. All three policies are necessary but in this chapter only the first is dealt with in detail.

This "overpopulation" so baffles the Europeans that many of them see a "contraceptive campaign" as the only solution. "The time has come," said one European member of the Legislative Council, "when we should seriously consider educating the population of this country to the use of contraceptives."[2] One must dismiss this as being no policy but the clearest evidence of political bankruptcy.

We have seen from Table 2 that even if African productivity was raised to that of Yugoslavia before 1939 it would constitute a major advance. The overall shortages of the most important foodstuffs are shown in Table 5.

The deficiencies are plain. Yet it would be foolish to imagine that one could reach Harvey's scale merely within a year or two. The world food shortage requires a far more realistic policy the main basis of which (as applied to Kenya) must be the production of enough food to provide the basic caloric demands of everyone. This in turn sets certain limits to livestock policy, since the amount of grain that would feed four men per day would produce enough food for only one man if put through stock.

### Livestock and Overstocking

The word "overstocking" covers a multitude of sins, some of which may be traced to the Kenya Administration. Before discussing it, we must deal briefly with the attitude of the African to his livestock. Here there are three aspects, though their separation is somewhat artificial.

First, cattle (and goats) have the function of money. The bride-price is paid in cattle, etc., and it should be noted that practically no

[1] K.L.C., November 30th, 1945.

[2] Major A. G. Keyser, K.L.C., November 15th, 1945. We respectfully suggest as the slogan for this campaign "More production—less reproduction!"

African women may be married without such bride-price. They are also used for land purchase among the Kikuyu and North Kavirondo.

Secondly, they have use-value, since they provide food for the African.

TABLE 5

*Extent of Food Shortage*
*(Units of 200 lb.)*

| | *Harvey scale* | *Soldier ration scale*[2] | *Actually eaten*[3] | *Amount available, 1930*[4] |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Maize and equivalents[1] | 6,345,880 | 8,221,764 | 4,687,520 | 5,003,688[6] |
| Sugar | 517,000 | 682,500 | 682,500 | 178,143 |
| Ghee | 345,000 | 345,000 | — | — |
| Meat, lb. | 273,400,000 | 546,000,000 | 96,000,000 | 273,000,000[5] |
| Milk, galls. | 120,000,000 | — | 35,000,000 | 88,900,000 |

Thirdly, livestock are required for ritual and similar purposes.

The first two points were summed up by Africans as follows: "It is from this industry that the native draws his livelihood . . . when the prices of agricultural products are low. He pays his tax from this and feeds himself and his family from this industry . . . and buys his clothes from the proceeds of ghee and sale of whole-milk."[7]

The figures we have given show that there is, in fact, an overall shortage of livestock to produce the milk and meat required. "In the Kikuyu group reserves he will probably require more stock in his farming operations than he has to-day. . . . There is a shortage of mature slaughter stock in the reserves, but there is a shortage of

[1] Includes roots, bananas, vegetables, etc., based on the caloric value of the potato equated to maize, wimbi, pulses which are taken at 4½ lb. roots=1 lb. maize, etc.

[2] Ration as actually issued to Askari. (Milk is sometimes added in tea.)

[3] Based on evidence to Kenya Land Commission by Mr. Fazan, D.C., on diet of Kikuyu (Vol. 1, pp. 960–1,039).

[4] Based on Agricultural Census, 1930.

[5] Based on numbers of livestock taking Fazan's estimate of what such numbers should produce. By all observers' accounts, only a tiny fraction of these amounts are consumed by the main agricultural tribes.

[6] This includes native-produced maize exported abroad, estimated at 164,080 bags in 1930.

[7] Memorandum of Native Chamber of Commerce, Carter Report, Vol. 3, p. 2,145.

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slaughter stock all over the world; which seems to arise from the higher standard of living in regard to the consumption of meat. . . ."[1] In a special dispatch to the Secretary of State, the Governor of Kenya wrote: "Regarded from the point of view of the economic and nutritional needs of the family in terms of stock products or desirable density of stock in the land in terms of good husbandry, in most of these cases stock are in fact insufficient in numbers, paradoxical as this may sound when talking of overstocked land."[2] Apart from tribes like the Masai, the biggest African reserves are inadequately stocked. Whence then this "overstocking"?

*Imperfect Transition to Money Economy.* Although taxation, cash crops, trade in hides and skins, etc., are used to wean (if one may use so gentle a word) the African from the "goat standard" to sterling, recurrent agricultural crises and food shortages force him back into his traditional currency. "Cattle," says Walter Odede, "can be exchanged for millet or maize at any time, i.e. during famine or in good years; but cattle-owners tend to refuse millet or maize for their cattle after good harvests."[3]

*Shortage of Grazing Land.* When more land was available and the tribal structure more intact, the Africans were able to practise some measure of controlled grazing.[4] To-day the grazing available for the African's livestock is quite inadequate and shows itself in the disastrous effect on the soil.

These appear to be the two main reasons for what is known as overstocking. There are some secondary factors. The bride-price is considered by some to be the "villain" of the piece. What has been overlooked is the connection between bride-price and wage labour: Sometimes the young African who leaves the reserve to work takes his bride with him. Since his in-laws will not receive the customary help from him when they need it, they tend to demand a higher bride-price.[5] Wartime conditions, in which cash was more plentiful, but consumers' goods hard to obtain, sent the bride-price rocketing in some areas. Some believe that control of rinderpest is another important reason for stock accumulation. It does not follow, however, that "disease is . . . the natural cure for overgrazing"; in fact,

[1] Mr. Daubney, Director of Veterinary Services, K.L.C., November 16th, 1945.

[2] Quoted *E.A. and Rh.*, November 21st, 1946.

[3] *E.A. and U. Nat. Hist. Journal*, February, 1942. W. Odede, a Jaluo, is on the staff of the Veternary Department.

[4] Some examples are given in the section on Land Tenure.

[5] Dr. L. S. B. Leakey, Carter Report, Vol. 1, p. 690.

it is "an important, perhaps the most important cause of the trouble."[1] Dr. Worthington argues that overstocking, by producing aridity, reduces the incidence of parasitic diseases favoured in persistent vegetation. The African stock-owners favour this aridity, preferring seasonal losses from starvation, which they understand, to continual and greater losses from disease, which they do not understand. *He concludes that control of the major animal diseases* is essential for the solution of overstocking. This situation might have been avoided had not the Veterinary Department been disproportionately interested in the welfare of European-owned cattle.[2]

It is customary to rebuke the Africans for holding on to their cattle. One reads with interest that not so long before the war the Africans could not sell their stock even if they had wished: ". . . most of the pastoral native reserves have been in perpetual veterinary quarantine for many years, and the people have therefore had no opportunity of selling their surplus stock. . . . In the view of many, quarantine restrictions were introduced in the interests of non-natives. . . ."[3]

What is Government policy? Two measures have been continuously urged upon them. Firstly, to close for grazing and so to rest and recondition blocks of land in the reserves. Secondly, to carry out compulsory culling, i.e. picking out from the stock for slaughter, inferior animals or those too old for breeding. An attempt at compulsory culling among the Wakamba before the war had to be abandoned because of the tribe's hostility.[4] The low prices offered for the stock did not help to win co-operation from the stock-owners. The first measure has limited value unless there is a real expansion of grazing land, otherwise the effect is to crowd people and stock in another limited area and so repeat the story of erosion and desolation in another part of the reserve.[5] This very weakness makes it an attractive solution to the labour-hungry Europeans.

[1] Dr. E. B. Worthington, *Science in Africa*, p. 441.

[2] "The Animal Husbandry Department, which embraces the veterinary services, seems to devote the greater part of its time to the care of European cattle, and the setting of quarantine boundaries about native cattle areas when disease is known to exist." *Report, East Africa Commission*, 1925, Cmd. 2387.

[3] Memorandum by J. F. G. Troughton, D.O., to Carter Report, Vol. 3, p. 3,137.

[4] The leader of Wakamba resistance to compulsory culling in 1938, Mr Samuel Muindi, was deported from the Wakamba Reserve, and has been detained without trial to the present day.

[5] Cf. Polo-Evans, *op. cit.*, p. 24.

There is much that can be done to improve the quality of existing livestock and get more out of them.

The technical means of improving stock are well known. It is largely a matter of the veterinary services paying more attention to the problem. Co-operatives might be encouraged to build cattle dips; to purchase one or two good bulls, while a central insemination centre could supply sperm. An increased number of breeding centres should be organised in all African areas. More attention is required for improved feeding, passing over from ranching to store-feeding.

A campaign to eliminate the major cattle diseases and revise the quarantine legislation would go a long way.

The use of cattle as currency could be changed by paying a good price for stock (even if uneconomic), and guaranteeing a stable food supply while culling and rehabilitation is taking place, with the co-operation of the owners. Better stock routes and transport facilities would allow beneficial exchange with the agricultural areas.

A stable price for his products other than those from livestock is important also. Otherwise the African farmer will prefer his cattle to any other form of currency.

The Livestock Marketing Board which the Government proposes to set up should be under African control.

More and better distributed water-boring is necessary, not only for improvement of stock, but also to prevent erosion around the existing limited water supplies.

Improvement of grasslands through pasture research, as advocated in the Pole-Evans Report, can be achieved, while local processing of ground-nuts and cotton-seed would also make available quantities of stock-feed.

Rapid growth in educational facilities, as we recommend elsewhere, will help.

None of these measures will be effective if the co-operation of the Africans is not won and held. The path of compulsion is the path of increasing hostility. The key to the problem may be found in the following exchange between the Chairman of the Kenya Land Commission and an African witness, James Mutua.

*Chairman:* . . . Supposing the Government said that a certain amount of land could only hold a certain number of cattle, would they assist the Government by agreeing and so keep that area good always?

*James Mutua:* When they have enough grass, the Local Native Councils can arrange between themselves that the country is not to be spoiled again.

*Chairman:* Why do they not want the advice and assistance of the administrative and veterinary officers as to the amount of stock that an area can cover?

*James Mutua:* If it is left to the L.N.Cs., it will be all right. If the Government come into it, they are frightened the Government will take their country away again.

*Chairman:* Supposing the arrangements were all to be left to the Local Native Councils, but before the L.N.Cs. began to act a veterinary officer was sent there to decide, in discussions with them, how many cattle could properly be supported there, would they accept that number and keep to it?

*James Mutua:* Everything will be in their hands and then they can call in the veterinary officer and make the decision with him before they do anything with that area.[1]

Had this lesson been learned in 1932 the pasture lands of Kenya would not present as desolate a picture as they do to-day.[2]

The shortage of grazing land, however, demands a drastic and immediate solution. It is the sheerest lunacy to allow considerable areas of valuable grazing land in the "White" Highlands to lie unused while no less valuable grazing land in African areas is being rapidly ruined through congestion. Foremost among any proposals for improving Kenya's livestock industry is the fullest use of her pasture lands by the Africans.

Given sound development in pastoral and agricultural areas, a considerable internal trade could develop between those areas which are primarily agricultural (as the Kikuyu) and those primarily pastoral (as the Masai). Indeed, there was once a flourishing exchange in vegetables and cattle between these two tribes. The improvement in livestock would reflect itself in the consumption of more meat and a much greater production of milk and ghee. "Experience. . . .

[1] Evidence in Ukamba Province, 1932, Vol. 2, p. 1,337.

[2] Cf. Report of Committee appointed to advise on how to deal with overstocking in the Native Pastoral Areas, 1941. There was, of course, no African on the Committee, which recommended compulsory reduction of stock. The Governor wisely rejected this recommendation, whereupon two members of the Committee resigned. It should be noted that the Government continued the compulsory requisitioning of African livestock for eighteen months after the end of the war.

has shown how quickly a dairy industry can be founded amongst Africans when the facilities are available. . . ."[1] To make these facilities available must be the primary task of those responsible for animal husbandry.

### Agriculture

The African, we have shown, grows only enough for subsistence. Taxation, however, brings him within the orbit of a money economy. The drive for revenue and super-profits inevitably goes further than compelling a high proportion of able-bodied men to become wage-earners. "All must work," says a Kenya Government report,[2] and though policy is modified by the settlers, pressure for cash crops grows steadily. New needs and standards are aroused in the African which demand satisfaction. Malnourished as they are, foods of high nutritive value are replaced by crops less nutritive, but financially more rewarding. European potatoes and commercial beans have supplanted sweet potatoes and cow peas. The cash reward is not commensurate with the damage done both to the Africans and to the soil.

Little capital equipment enters into African farming. Fertilisers and general farm implements are rarely to be seen. A tiny percentage use small steel ploughs, but the heavy hoe and the *panga* (a heavy bush knife) are the main farming implements.

The Africans have also suffered from neglect by the Agricultural Department, a fact resented by them and noted in the past by several observers. There is, therefore, much leeway to be made up.

Despite the difficulties, there are certain technical measures which, if carried through speedily, would be of great aid to the African peasant.

#### *Greater Use of Manures and Fertilisers*

The use of animal waste, though not unknown to the Africans, was not highly developed among them. It has been, however, the general experience of agricultural officers everywhere that its use is soon appreciated.

The collection and effective use of dung could be carried through on a communal basis. The making of compost from vegetable waste and urine should be widely taught. Green manuring would help

[1] Report by Mr. J. Smith on visit to East Africa, 1941.

[2] Interim Report on Development, 1945.

considerably. From increased yields of oil seeds, more fertilisers could be produced.

It is possible that the shortage of nitrogen, etc., in the soil would require to be made good by imported fertilisers, such as ammonium sulphate. But silico-phosphates of great value have been discovered near Tororo Rock. Their importance can be gauged by this statement of the Acting Director of Agriculture: "Yields of 3·6 bags of wheat to the acre with no fertiliser treatment went up, on the same land, to 5 bags to the acre when using a mixture of superphosphates and Uganda rock phosphates, and increased to 6·75 bags to the acre when the land was treated with silico-phosphates."[1]

Most of Kenya's pre-war fertiliser imports were used on the coffee plantations. The new discoveries must benefit African farms.

### *Water Supply, Drainage and Soil Conservation*

These constitute the outstanding physical problems of Kenya's agriculture. The technique of soil conservation is well known—contour-terracing, regrassing of slopes, etc. To carry these measures through, the Government must add to its heavy equipment for terracing, and since soil conservation must be planned on a regional basis, the fullest use of communal methods is essential.

The water supply for domestic and agricultural purposes is in no way satisfactory. The Africans suffer especially from the fact that the Europeans seized the natural water supplies in the first two decades of the century. The effects of this alienation are now becoming acute as congestion and land-hunger grows in the reserves. An ambitious programme of water conservation and water boring is therefore important. Reafforestation also plays an important part in conserving water supplies, and a proposal to plant 200,000 to 350,000 acres of soft woods in Crown forests[2] would assist not only water conservation, but the timber industry and fuel supply.

The idea has been strongly pressed of an African Civil Labour Corps "composed of men discharged from the Pioneers and military labour units and officered by young Kenya Europeans, for use on large-scale public works. The Corps also to be available for private works if required."[3] Such a scheme is intolerable.

There is nothing against a team of African soil-conservation workers, but they must be attracted to the work by good rates of pay, and employed on projects designed to benefit Africans.

[1] *E.A.S.*, March 1st, 1946. [2] Humphrey, *op. cit.*

[3] Sub-Committee on Post-War Employment of Africans, 1943.

## *Mechanised Farming*

It may seem strange to talk of mechanised farming when holdings are so small and capital scarce. But any serious effort to improve African farming must include the fullest use of the most efficient mechanical equipment.

The agricultural machinery pool maintained by the Government for the use of European farmers should be retained and used for the Africans. It has been too easily assumed that the pool would not benefit the Africans. The argument used by the Member for Agriculture in favour of dissolving the pool was: "because I think, quite apart from anything else, it is a bad system to run things that are not economically justifiable under normal circumstances." (Fortunately for the Europeans, as we shall show, that argument was not applied to White Settlement!)

*Far more agricultural machinery should be imported for use of African co-operatives*, as, for instance, the small multi-purpose agricultural tractors now in use in Britain. Combined with adequate technical education, tremendous and beneficial changes could be brought about. Modern agriculture cannot be built on the hoe and the *panga*.

## *Improvement of Seeds*

"Of all the methods of improving agricultural technique . . . none has brought about such progress as the improvement of plants through selection and cross-breeding. . . . The introduction of a better variety in an agricultural area means an immediate profit for the agriculturalist. It improves the crop either in quantity or in quality, while scarcely increasing the cost of cultivation."[1]

Better varieties of maize and the improvement of African-grown wheat should be investigated .Seed farms, staffed by trained Africans, would assist greatly.

These appear to be the most important technical improvements necessary. However, they would not be effective without attention to proper storage of grain,[2] improved roads and transport, milling machinery for grains, which would save much time and labour.

The aim of all these improvements must be the introduction of a rotational cropping system based on careful scientific work in all

[1] *Conditions and Improvement of Crop Production, etc.*, International Institute of Agriculture, 1939, p. 9.

[2] "The amount of stored grain damaged by insects . . . amounted to something like 7½ per cent. of the total." Professor Munro, *E.A.S.*, March 23rd, 1946.

the different areas of the country. Loose though it may have been, the Africans once had a cropping system which land-shortage and the new economic forces have broken down. To re-establish it on a scientific basis is an urgent need.

## Stable Prices

Though the settlers are responsible for the greater part of the colony's export trade, the Africans have also felt the effect of unstable prices. During the world economic crisis, the prices of wimbi and beans fell by a half; ghee fell by nearly two-thirds; hides fell from 30 sh. a frasila down to 6 sh. It meant a drastic reduction in the already tiny cash income of the African household. Any commodity schemes which stabilise prices must therefore be extended to cover the African producer as well as the European. Without stable prices, the growth of the internal market will be difficult. The danger in such commodity schemes is that prices will not be fixed in the interests of the African or that differential prices will be fixed which discriminate against the African; only increased African representation on the appropriate boards can combat this danger.

How are these urgent improvements to be carried through? As with livestock, compulsion is no solution. There is too much talk of "saving the African from the results of his ignorance" instead of helping him to help himself. This means more democracy, more co-operation, greater financial power and resources.

## Co-operatives

The scope for co-operatives among the Africans is immense. As far back as 1932, when giving evidence to the Kenya Land Commission, two Africans protested that they had no information as to correct market prices for produce and often learned that they had received a fraction of what they were entitled to. They asked for a marketing organisation on the lines of the Kenya Farmers Association to handle their produce.[1] Unfortunately, there has been strong prejudice against co-operatives in the past. To quote Sir Alan Pim: ". . . Up to the present, practically nothing has been done in Kenya in developing Native co-operative organisations, and what little has been attempted appears to be on doubtful lines."

The recent passing of a Co-operative Ordinance does not appear to indicate more than lip-service on the part of the Government.

[1] Carter Report, Vol. 3, p. 2,306.

A long-established Kenya official was appointed to the important post of Registrar and promptly proceeded to belittle the African desire for co-operation. In an interview he stated: " 'So far I have seen very little desire on the part of the Africans to adopt co-operative trading principles.' . . . He felt that the present time was inopportune for the initiation of co-operative societies, when Africans had received war gratuities and remittances, and had more money than they ever had before. 'I fear that many of them will not become good co-operative material until their accumulated money has vanished.' "[1]

Discouragement of co-operatives does not only take the form of words. "I have before me," said Archdeacon Beecher in the Kenya Legislative Council, "documents which indicate that a certain co-operative society was formed . . . with the full knowledge and support of the Administration. After that company had been registered and after it had commenced business, the agricultural officer in the area concerned clamped down on its activities, with the result that the co-operative society sustained an immediate loss of 5,135 sh. I submit that this is not an isolated instance. . . ."[2]

And if the Africans insist on a co-operative, it is not unusual for the agricultural officer to keep it under his thumb to such an extent that its African officers are not allowed to inspect payments and receipts.

The facts show that the Africans are immensely enthusiastic about the development of co-operatives.

"I found practically everywhere," wrote the author of a report on co-operative possibilities in Kenya, "quite a keen demand for co-operatives of traders. The Africans are undoubtedly extremely interested in securing a foothold in the trade of their own country and exasperated by the difficulties they encounter when they try to do so."[3]

Examples were given of excellent co-operatives which had developed without any guidance. There was the Teita Vegetable Co-operative, with 239 members, a paid-up share capital of over £150 (an extremely large sum for Africans), and which produced, graded, transported and sold on the Mombasa market over 900,000 lb. of vegetables a year, for which the growers received over £4,500 out of a gross selling price of £6,300. The ability displayed is not confined to one tribe. The Kiambu Chicken and Egg Sellers' Union

[1] *E.A.S.*, April 26th, 1946. [2] K.L.C., November 26th, 1946.

[3] *Report of an Investigation of Co-operative Possibilities in Kenya*, W. K. H. Campbell, 1944.

handle 3,500 eggs per day as well as poultry for the table, and has raised over 8,000 sh. in share capital in eight months.

The co-operative possibilities reported on included wattle transport societies, pig-producers' societies in Nyeri and Fort Hall, egg-marketing societies in Meru, Embu, Kikuyu, etc., co-operative associations of farmers for the direction and control of cultivation, co-operative *posho* mills, co-operative dairies, societies of vegetable-growers, and many other schemes.

As well as co-operative trading, considerable emphasis should be placed on producers' co-operatives which would enable the Africans to use modern techniques. There are some who pretend that the choice for the African lies between unrestricted individual farming and collectivisation. One well-known writer on Kenya questions succeeded in writing two articles on the agricultural and economic problems of Kenya where the choice is put as above, but the word "co-operative" not mentioned.[1] This is another way of dismissing the importance of co-operative development.

The road to collectivisation can only be the "organising of millions of small and middle peasants in co-operative societies, along the path of developing in the countryside mass co-operation supported by the State by means of credit on easy terms."[2] . . . "Collective farms begin to arise and develop only as a result of the development and consolidation of the marketing and supply co-operatives."[3]

The sincerity of the Kenya Government will be measured by the extent to which it encourages and assists genuine co-operation among the Africans.

All these schemes of development will require a big extension of agricultural education as well as an extension of the Agricultural Department. The first stage in agricultural training must be a scheme to produce a large number of African demonstrators and teachers up to a certain minimum standard (which should not be so high as to conflict with the need for speed). Training centres should be provided in all African areas. Model seed farms and stock farms would undertake to teach a certain number of Africans in the area they serve. As more trained Africans are turned out by the training centre, so a number of them could then return for higher training. It must be stressed that in a largely illiterate population the best results will be achieved if agricultural education is made a living part of the movement for mass education.

[1] Cf. Elspeth Huxley, *The Times*, March 25th–26th, 1946.
[2] Stalin, *Leninism*, p. 47. [3] *Ibid.*, p. 211.

## Land Tenure

The social organisation of all agrarian peoples is based on the land and the way it is used. Land tenure describes the relations into which men enter in using the land and which constitute the core of their social organisation.

Among primitive peoples, land is not a commodity to be bought and sold. It is the property of the community, of the tribe or clan. This common ownership exists whether the land is cultivated or not. Actual cultivation is undertaken by families or individuals who possess certain rights of usufruct and security. In many tribes these rights are very extensive, but normally "fell far short of a full ownership in the modern sense."[1]

The system of tenure in Kenya followed the actual system of land use, i.e. shifting cultivation, "under which land which has been left to become clothed by natural vegetation is broken up, cropped for a few years and, when the soil begins to show signs of exhaustion, is left once more to natural influences. . . . The period of cropping and resting varies with the natural conditions and the pressure of the population on the soil."[2] Grazing is nearly always communal.

While shifting cultivation is in no way a scientific method of restoring fertility, it did not lead to erosion so long as land was plentiful. It was the seizure of land and demarcation of reserves which made shifting cultivation impossible. Since the change was not combined with a revolution in technique, it has led to the most serious exhaustion of the soil.

Communal grazing, so loudly condemned to-day, also had certain safeguards against overgrazing.

The Luo for example before the days of the present administration practised a system of rotational grazing. The community was divided up into small groups, known as *gweng*, each consisting of from ten to twenty families under the direction of a leader, *jaduong' gweng*. The group claimed exclusive rights of grazing over the surrounding pasture, known as *lek*, and jealously exerted their rights in this respect. Each *gweng* had four or five *lek*, and as a general rule grazed its livestock in a single herd in one *lek* at a time. This allowed the other pastures to recover. To-day "the grazing grounds of *gweng* have lost their boundaries and *jaduong' gweng* is no longer as powerful as formerly. *The new administrative system has cut across the old tribal authorities.*"[3] (My italics.—S. A.)

[1] Livestock, p. 7. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 11. [3] *Ibid.*, p. 14.

A system of grazing among the Kamba has also been described. "It is possible," writes Liversage,[1] "that closer study would show that regulation is more common than our present knowledge indicates."

Among the Kikuyu, family rights are especially strong. The unit is a *githaka*, "which represents a land claim staked out by an original founder, modified by subsequent division among his descendants. A *githaka* is presided over by the *moramati*, who is the senior member of the family group. According to Jomo Kenyatta, a *moramati* cannot prevent a member of the family group from cultivating any portion of the waste lands of the *githaka*, provided there is no taboo or custom prohibiting the cultivation of that particular piece of land. His duty is to see that the land is properly used and to carry out the wishes of his dead father. . . . His consent is necessary to the admission of a tenant to the *githaka*."[2]

The seizure of a great part of the fertile land by the Europeans and the demarcation of reserves created serious land-shortage. The system of shifting cultivation and the old grazing methods were thus made impossible. The introduction of a money economy by wage labour and the limited encouragement of cash crops, encouraged the trend towards individual ownership of land free from tribal restraints or regulation. Finally, the arbitrary appointment of chiefs and headmen cut across tribal institutions and practices and undermined them.

## Government Policy

Government policy on land tenure has been characterised by drift and hesitation. Little if any guidance is given to the administrative officers, who retain an astounding degree of freedom in influencing local practice in their own areas. The main reason for this attitude of *laissez-faire* has been the Government's preoccupation with White Settlement. As the reserves were regarded primarily as reservoirs of labour, overcrowding and fragmentation had their advantages, in that they squeezed out the able-bodied men and youths.

Up till quite recently, the practice has been to allow (and sometimes encourage) those factors which break up the old system of tenure. Individual ownership has been regarded as the right and civilised objective of the African peasant. The Kenya Land Commission in 1934 held "a conscious advance towards private right-holding to be generally desirable. . . ."[3] The 1934 Kenya Native

[1] *Ibid.*, p. 13. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 10. [3] Carter Report, Cmd. 4556, 1934, p. 423.

Affairs Report stated that the conversion of family or clan lands into individual holdings "must win the friendly support of the Government."

The combined effect of growing production for the market and administrative practice has been to bring about increasing differentiation among the Africans. Liversage writes: "The writer has heard it said that in the Kikuyu country the more influential individuals are accumulating large areas of land in their own hands. . . ."[1] The District Commissioner for Kiambu District wrote in his 1941 annual report that: "It is a fact that hundreds, possibly even thousands, of acres have changed hands by 'irredeemable sale' during the past ten or fifteen years, and that most of this has gone into the hands of a very few people."[2] "There are many signs," wrote one official, "pointing to the danger that a large class of landless peasants will come into existence, as in India."[3] The same process is witnessed in the Kavirondo Reserve, especially in the north. There is now no doubt that in the main reserves differentiation is well on its way and carries with it many problems and dangers for the future.

It is easy to see now the terrible consequences of official policy for the great mass of African peasantry. In Machakos, for example, the entire district is now living on the dole. £80,000 has been set aside for them in 1946, since the district, "however favourable the rains, cannot produce anything more than a fraction of the food required to maintain the inhabitants until that district has been rehabilitated. . . . The fact is *we must regard it as on the dole for the time being and provision for famine relief will be necessary from year to year.*"[4] (My italics.—S. A.)

So disastrous have been the effects of Government policy that the reserves now require considerable sums of money if they are to be rehabilitated. Consequently, a new policy is being worked out, the main feature of which is the use (and even resuscitation) of tribal institutions, which had powers over use and distribution of land. "We recommend that Government should recognise and use as far as possible the indigenous institutions in matters of internal land control and so preserve the 'traditional conception.'"[5] The Interim Report on Development (1945) states that "individual ownership

[1] Liversage, p. 97.

[2] Quoted, Philips, *Native Tribunals*, 1946, p. 59.  [3] Philips, *ibid.*, p. 41.

[4] Acting Financial Secretary, K.L.C., November 13th, 1946.

[5] *Memorandum on Policy in Regard to Land Tenure in the Native Lands of Kenya*, by H. E. Lambert and P. Wyn Harris (both Government officials), 1945.

rights should extend only as long as the owners are in beneficial occupation of their holding. . . . It should be extended to the native areas and the African landholder should be led to regard himself as the tenant of his tribe, and the tribe as a corporate body with powers to enforce the proper use of land with the final sanction of eviction."[1] This has not yet become official Government policy, but it is being practised by certain District Commissioners.

Before commenting on this new development, a few notes on other "alternatives" are in place.

Some consider freehold (or lengthy leasehold) to be the ideal form of landownership which would guarantee better care of the land. The result, however, in New Zealand and elsewhere has been a tremendous growth in indebtedness and mortgaging of property. In Kenya, "where European farmers were granted land on 999 years' lease, subject to trifling conditions of rent payment, it has been considered necessary to introduce a Land and Water Preservation Ordinance in an attempt to restrain lessees from spoliation of their land."[2]

An outstanding attempt to provide a form of individual tenure (without absolute title to the land) for Africans was the Glen Gray Act of 1894 in South Africa. The Act provided for an area to be surveyed into allotments of eight acres, the spare land in each location being treated as grazing commonage. The occupier had security of tenure on payment of a perpetual quit-rent, and received title-deeds for his property. However, he could not mortgage it nor alienate it without the Governor's consent. Succession was prescribed in detail, but based on primogeniture. His property could be forfeited for rebellion, stock theft or failure to make beneficial use of the land.

This much-boosted experiment was commented on by the Chief Native Commissioner at Transkei (1929) as follows: "But for the money they get from the mines, they would be starved—straight away."

Kenya, always ready to tread in the Union's footsteps, has experimented along these lines at Olenguorone, with most unhappy results for the Africans.

Certain writers on soil conservation are so impressed by the magnitude of soil erosion in tropical Africa that they recommend a very different policy of land tenure. "A feudal type of society in which the native cultivators would to some extent be tied

[1] P. 4. [2] Livestage, p. 100.

to the lands of their European overlords seems the most generally suited to meet the needs of the soil in the present state of African development. Africa cannot be expected to accept feudalism without a struggle; in parts of British Africa it would mean jettisoning the promising experiment of indirect rule; everywhere it would mean denying to the natives some of the liberty and opportunities for material advancement to which their labours should entitle them. . . . Self-interest, untrammelled by fears of native rivalry, would ensure that the responsibility was carried out in the ultimate interests of the soil."[1] Needless to say, this is not a proposal which Africans would encourage!

## Solutions

The African systems of tenure, it is clear, have received staggering blows from the actions of British imperialism. To see in some technical or legal changes a solution of this difficult problem is to chase a will-o'-the-wisp. Indeed, no full solution is possible within the framework of a colonial economy. Otherwise that solution would have been discovered and practised.

Two things are essential for any real advance: more land and more democracy.

The outstanding issue in Kenya to-day is land-hunger. No form of tenure will lead to good farming unless the congestion on the land is relieved. Even to-day in Kenya large areas of unoccupied fertile land permanently reserved for Europeans jostle reserves where overcrowding has reached terrible proportions. This unoccupied land must be made available for African settlement. Next must come the reclamation of land by clearing tsetse-fly, water boring and irrigation. The area must be carefully chosen and, if suitable, well prepared for settlement.[2]

The question of more democracy is no less fundamental. The Africans must not merely have a big say in formulating proposals on land tenure, but must control the execution of these proposals. This is perhaps the place to discuss the official trend towards the use of tribal institutions. The results of the old policy have been clearly shown. But why after doing so much to destroy tribal institutions is it seriously proposed to revive them? Why not use, instead, the Local Native Councils, which have been in existence since 1925. But now the L.N.Cs. are almost contemptuously described as

[1] Jacks and Whyte, *The Rape of the Earth*, 1939, p. 262.

[2] Cf. pp. 68–70 for description of resettlement areas proposed by Government.

"foreign institutions composed of native individuals freed from the controlling hierarchy by nomination or election for the purpose "[1] Government policy is to create and directly control two sets of local authorities—the Local Native Councils and the various tribal institutions (different in every tribe). They could deal quite separately with these bodies. The effect would be to build up divisions among the Africans and frustrate the real development of African local government.

The most genuine solution is the complete democratisation of the Local Native Councils. Elsewhere in this book, the proposals for formation of location councils grouped into District Councils are set out. These councils should be elected on the basis of adult suffrage. This would ensure that they would be effectively controlled by the citizens and could use, if necessary and for particular purposes, what tribal institutions existed. In the hands of an alien government, tribal institutions can become a weapon against the political advance of the African. In the hands of democratic local organs, the best communal features of tribal life can be harnessed for the good of the community.

The following represent the first steps to be taken with regard to African land tenure.

1. The land occupied by a tribe must be declared the unalienable possession of the tribe. No land must be transferred to individuals outside the tribe.

2. Where individual tenure is already predominant, as among the Kikuyu, the Wakamba and the North Kavirondo, land titles must be granted based on a survey of the land. This survey should be carried through at the expense of the Government. Where communal tenure is predominant, it must be untouched except at the wish of the members of the tribe.

3. All proposals for land-tenure changes must be submitted to democratic discussion and vote by the Africans concerned, and must not otherwise be carried out.

4. The democratically elected African District Councils should, if the people are agreeable, be given certain powers for protecting tenants-at-will, etc.

5. Soil conservation campaigns should be directed by agriculture committees of the African District Councils, together with the District agricultural officers.

6. These same principles should apply to resettlement of Africans

[1] Lambert and Harris, *op. cit.*

outside the existing reserves. Such resettlement should take place in communities so that democratic local authorities can be immediately brought into being.

The scope of these proposals is certainly limited. The Kenya African lives in fear that more of his land will be taken from him; while day by day he watches the deterioration of what little land he has. The more the Government wins the trust of the African by returning to him the land which is his, giving him all possible practical assistance to farm it better and encouraging democracy and initiative, the sooner will come that beneficial revolution in technique which will produce what the people require and retain the fertility of the soil.

# CONGESTION AND RESETTLEMENT

THE limited areas into which the Africans are crowded and the low level of technique which we have described have created the most serious congestion. In the following table an attempt is made to estimate the extent of the congestion by comparison with formerly backward countries of Eastern Europe.

TABLE 6

*Agricultural Overpopulation*

| *Country* (1) | *Agricultural pop. per 100 acres arable land* (2) | *Yield maize and wheat bags per acre (200 lb.)* (3) | *Prod. of maize and wheat bags (200 lb.) per head of agric. pop.* (4) | *Agricultural surplus pop., per cent.* (5) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Hungary | 32·3 | 6·5 | 14·5 | 19 |
| Czecho-slovakia | 35·1 | 7·7 | 11·0 | 20 |
| Roumania | 38·0 | 4·9 | 9·6 | 22 |
| Poland | 51·0 | 4·62 | 6·16 | 25 |
| Greece | 49·3 | 3·49 | 4·4 | 32 |
| Bulgaria | 46·1 | 5·2 | 8·0 | 36 |
| Yugoslavia | 53·8 | 6·2 | 8·5 | 35 |
| Average[1] | 43·65 | 5·7 | 8·3 | 36[2] |
| Kenya[3] | 159·4 | 3·13 | 1·32 | 52 |

A useful check on the figure for Kenya is provided by Mr. Humphrey in his report on *Land and Population in S. Nyeri*. He estimates a surplus population of approximately 48 per cent. if every family is to have 11½ acres. Since the 11½ acres (even with the yields

[1] Cols. 2–5 derived from *Economic Development of South-eastern Europe*, P.E.P., 1945.

[2] The P.E.P. book states that their estimates of overpopulation are from private sources.

[3] The Kenya average is based on Kavirondo, Kikuyu, Kamba and the Coast. The figure for Kenya "overpopulation" is a guess based on the comparison of Kenya figures with that of the average for the seven European countries given above.

assumed) is almost certainly too small,[1] 52 per cent. is a conservative figure.

In absolute figures, this means an agricultural "surplus population" of 1,571,000.[2]

Any realistic long-term programme for Kenya must provide additional land and alternative occupations for a million and a half people. This represents over 40 per cent. of the total population dependent on agriculture in 1945.

Where and how are these people to be resettled?

If we seek a solution within the boundaries of Kenya, two possibilities exist: first, opening up unalienated Crown Land; second, using to the full, the land in the "White" Highlands.

The Kenya White Paper on "Land Utilisation and Settlement" lists the areas as "worth reconnoitring." A brief examination of these is illuminating.

1. *Plains around Teita Hills.* This probably covers the area from the Tsavo River to the coast, and from the railway to the Tanganyika border, but excludes the Coast Native Land Unit. It is an area of about 4,000 square miles, and is shown on the Rainfall Map[3] as having a 20-inch rainfall. It forms part of what used to be known as the Taru Desert. Except for the Tsavo River along its northern border, it is waterless except for a few salt or brackish waterholes, and thickly covered with tsetse-infested scrub. It is doubtful if this kind of land can be cleared of tsetse—which involves clearing it of bush—for less than 15 sh. per acre, and its carrying capacity when that is done is not more than a beast to 30 acres. No cropping is possible on such land, and as a pastoral proposition it might support two families per square mile. The cost of clearing, providing water and cattle dips will not be less than £500 per square mile, or £250 per family settled. Over and above this, each family would have to spend at least 300 man-days annually keeping down the bush. The area may be written off.

2. *Chyulu in Machakos District.* This is presumably the area from which the Carter Commission recommended the removal of 3,194

[1] "Elsewhere in both the higher and lower areas it should probably be larger. . . ." Humphrey, *op. cit.*, p. 10.

[2] This figure is 52 per cent. of the population of the Nyanza, Central and Coast Provinces. Nyanza and Central contain the Kavirondo, Kikuyu and Wakamba peoples. It is assumed here that there is no "overpopulation" among the Nandi, Suk, Masai and other pastoral tribes not in the three provinces mentioned.

[3] See the Rainfall Map attached to Pim Report.

Wakamba,[1] mainly on the ground that there was not sufficient water for them on Chyulu. If water can be provided by boring or otherwise, these 3,194 could be moved back—and probably more. Let us say 1,000 families (5,000 persons) could be settled in Chyulu.

3. *C.S.M. land at Kibwesi.* The greater part of this land is unusable owing to deficient rainfall and tsetse. Moreover, the Wakamba already occupy whatever of the land is usable. Provision of water supplies would make little difference.

4. *Tiva Valley, Sabaki.* This is the other half of the Taru Desert, north of the railway line. Except that it has one permanent fresh-water river on it (the Sabaki), it is similar to No. 1 in every respect.

5. *Olenguruoni.*[2] This is an area of 33,000 acres excised from the Masai Reserve in 1940 to provide land for Kikuyu "illegally" residing in Masailand. It also contains a number of families moved by Government from European-owned farms in Limuru District. The settlement might hold a maximum of 1,500 families, of whom 500 are already there. It has not so far been a success as an African settlement.

6. *Trans-Mara and Adjoining Areas.* Trans-Mara is an area of nearly 1,000 square miles bounded by the Mara River, the Tanganyika boundary, the Southern Kavirondo Reserve and the Kipsigis Reserve. It is difficult to understand how it comes to be included in this list. It was given to the Masai by proclamation dated July 23rd, 1912,[3] and will not be surrendered by them without a struggle. The "adjoining areas" can only mean the so-called Chepalunga Forest, an excellent piece of land, fertile, high rainfall, and free of tsetse. But it is already occupied by the Chepalunga tribe, an offshoot of the Kipsigis!

It is difficult to get information about the other four areas mentioned, three[4] of which are on the coast, while the fourth[5] cannot be traced on any of the maps.

Allowing five years for investigation, bush-clearing, provision of adequate water supplies and minimum housing, preliminary experimental work in suitable types of livestock and crops,[6] it is

[1] See Sect. 787, Carter Report.

[2] See a leading article in *Kenya Weekly News*, August 3rd, 1945.

[3] See Carter Report, Sect. 655.

[4] Nyangoro, Mpeketoni and Kimgu area, Lamy District. Kikoneni and Mrima areas of Digo District. Dry locations of Kilifi and Malindi Districts.

[5] Maugo Valley, South Kavirondo.

[6] As listed in the Kenya White Paper, "Land Utilisation and Settlement."

questionable if these areas would resettle more than 80,000 to 100,000 at the maximum.

Two other areas are mentioned by the Kenya White Paper: the Taveta area (to which an investigation team was sent) and the Upper Tana River.

*Taveta.* This area lies in the 25-inch rainfall belt, so that cropping without irrigation will be hazardous. The Lumi River flows through it and would provide irrigation water for about 25,000 acres if all of it could be used. But the river flows on as the Ruvu into Tanganyika, where its water is required at the Pangani Falls power station. There will be objections if all the water is taken.

The largest and best part of the irrigable area at Taveta is within the land owned by the Taveta Sisal Co. Ltd. It would have to be acquired by Government to make any irrigation scheme a success. The Wataveta Reserve also forms part of the irrigable area. That land could only be used to settle the Wataveta.

With the Taveta Sisal Co.'s land, it might be possible to settle 2,000 families at Taveta.

*Upper Tana River.* In 1939 a Report by experts[1] on the Tana Valley showed that several hundred thousand acres of suitable land could be irrigated by water brought by a high-level canal. There is, in addition, the flood plain of the lower Tana. The experts recommended that there should be no attempt to use the flood plain, but if this were reconsidered a very considerable area would be opened up for settlement. The population density of irrigated regions is considerably greater than that of non-irrigated regions. This is because "irrigation expands the range of crops, permits the cultivation of several crops per year and thus extends the agricultural season over practically the whole year."[2]

An estimate of the absorptive capacity of this region has no immediate significance, since even a general reconnaissance has not yet been carried out. However, given a density of 500 per irrigated square mile,[3] there is a future prospect of resettling perhaps 200,000 to 300,000 people.

These exhaust the areas of possible resettlement within the boundaries of Kenya, with the important exception of the "White" Highlands. While it is essential to press ahead with reconnaissance of the Tana Valley area, our survey has shown that the development

[1] *Report of the Tana River Expedition*, D. G. Harris and H. G. Simpson, 1939. Cf. also *Ourselves and Empire*, 1944, H. W. Foster.

[2] *The Economic Development of the Middle East*, Bonné, 1945. [3] *Ibid.*, p. 150.

of unalienated Crown land can give only small *immediate* relief to the pressure on the land. The list drawn up by the Kenya Government for exploration shows irresponsibility rather than concern.[1]

[1] "... On the African Land Settlement Board, of which I am a member, we have now been sitting for nearly a year, and I think it is perfectly true to say that we have not established *one native* on *one acre of land*." S. V. Cooke, K.L.C., July 4th, 1946.

## CHAPTER VI

# WHITE SETTLEMENT

"... It is the policy of this Government supported and confirmed again and again by the Imperial Government, that the Highlands of Kenya shall be reserved for the ownership and occupation of white residents only." MR. C. E. MORTIMER (*Commissioner of Lands and Settlement*).

"The natives of this colony have no land interests in the Highlands.... They have no rights to the land, and I hope they never will." MR. MONTGOMERY (*nominated Member for African Interests*).

"We have established the fact that we have rights in the area known as the Highlands, and we have not ... the slightest intention of giving up those rights or having them interfered with, and I think it is a real waste of time for minorities in this Council to keep on questioning them." MAJOR CAVENDISH-BENTINCK (*settlers' leader and now Member for Agriculture and Animal Husbandry*).[1]

THE white settlers have established a mythology of their own in which, not unnaturally, they play the part of the genie whose ability alone made the development of Kenya and its people possible. An earlier chapter has shown the indirect effects of White Settlement on African agriculture. Here we consider White Settlement from the standpoint of agricultural production and attempt to assess the contribution it has made. The basis of the European agricultural economy is the "White" Highlands.

### THE "WHITE" HIGHLANDS

The "White" Highlands is that part of Kenya "in which persons of European descent are to have a privileged position."[2] Not until 1934 was its area precisely defined, though in 1929 the Governor proposed a boundary enclosing some 48,000 square miles,[3] or the equivalent of the total area of the African land units.

The Kenya Land Commission was given the task of defining the "White" Highlands and eventually decided on a boundary enclosing 16,700 square miles (of which forest reserves totalled 3,950 square

[1] All quotations from the Legislative Council, April 13th, 1944.

[2] Terms of reference, Kenya Land Commission, Carter Report, p. 2.

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 483.

miles). "At the time when the Commission reported," wrote Lord Hailey,[1] "the actual area alienated to Europeans was 10,345 square miles, of which 11·8 per cent. was cultivated, 40·7 per cent. used for stock, 20 per cent. occupied by native squatters, and 27·5 per cent. not in use. The margin between the 16,700 square miles which were eventually defined by the Commission as reserved for European occupation and that already held by settlers was therefore considerable; there was an even greater disproportion between the area reserved and that in beneficial use. . . ."

In 1939, the Government by Order in Council officially proclaimed the new boundaries and set up a Highlands Board, controlled by settlers, which has power over all land transactions.[2] No African, Indian or any coloured person may buy or lease land in the "privileged" area.

The economic and political importance of the Highlands is measured, not by its size alone, but by the quality of the land. Norman Leys[3] states that "about half the land in Kenya that is worth cultivating" lies within the "White" Highlands. Even were it one-third and not a half, it would hardly alter the startling contrast whereby 2,000 settlers and their families hold from 33 to 50 per cent. of the best land in the country while almost 4 million Africans share the rest.

The table on p. 74 shows the utilisation of the "White" Highlands for selected years from 1920.

Certain conclusions may be drawn from this table:

(1) *In any one year, 2 to 2¼ million acres are shown as alienated,* but unoccupied.

(2) In 1940, 1 million acres of occupied land (including natural forest) are neither cultivated nor used as pasture.

(3) The area used as pasture is very generous, equal to 9 acres pasture per beast in 1942–3.[4] Among the Nandi, on the other hand,

[1] Hailey, p. 759.

[2] The members of the Board were the Chief Secretary as President, the Commissioner of Lands as Vice-President, and five unofficials, four of whom were chosen from the European elected members of the Legislative Council and one nominated by the Government. Africans were of course excluded. The Native Lands Trust Board, however, which was set up in the same year, provided direct representation for settlers, but not for Africans.

[3] *Colour Bar in East Africa*, p. 35.

[4] European livestock amounted to 365,762 head, which includes sheep and pigs, reckoning five sheep or pigs=one head of cattle.

TABLE 7

*Land Alienated, Occupied and Cultivated by Europeans (Acres)*

| | 1920 | 1924 | 1929 | 1932 | 1936 | 1940 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| No. of occupied agricultural holdings | 1,183 | 1,715 | 2,035 | 2,107 | 1,807 | 1,915 |
| Area alienated | — | — | 7,173,760 | 7,129,600 | 6,853,198 | 7,252,890 |
| Area occupied | 3,157,440 | 4,443,180 | 5,000,648 | 5,199,093 | 4,580,029 | 5,033,275 |
| Area under cultivation | 176,290 | 346,988 | 635,590 | 613,587 | 502,487 | 606,115 |
| Area of pasture land | — | — | — | 2,201,815 | 3,109,386 | 3,409,979 |
| Area of natural forest | — | — | — | — | 309,331 | 257,108 |
| Area of planted timber | — | — | — | — | 30,163 | 43,008 |
| Area of other land | — | — | — | — | 564,433 | 717,065 |

Main sources: Annual Blue Books and 1924 Agricultural Census.

it was said that "the land is at present carrying approximately one head to every two and a quarter acres. This tends to show the high carrying capacity of the land."[1]

(4) The average holding in 1920 was 2,660, compared with 2,627 acres in 1940 (that is, remained almost the same), while the average area cultivated rose in those years from 149 acres to only 316 acres.

(5) Since 1924 the number of occupiers has barely increased and much good land still lies undeveloped.[2]

[1] Carter Report, p. 272.

[2] "... In my own district of Upper Kipkarren there are lashings of unoccupied land, eminently suitable for the purpose of residential farms and plots, in one of the healthiest and most beautiful parts of Kenya. This is an area ... recognised as being especially fertile and well-watered, with a high percentage of arable and...." Letter to *E. A. S.*, April 12th, 1946.

In 1934 the Agricultural Census gave 2,027 occupiers, occupying 5,138,324 acres, but an analysis by districts showed that 39 per cent. of the total acreage occupied was taken up by only 14 per cent. of the occupiers. There is no doubt that the bulk of the alienated land is concentrated in the hands of a few powerful owners.

With these facts before us, we can now sketch in the history and development of White Settlement from the 1920's.

The end of the First World War opened up two years of great activity. In 1919–20, the European population increased 70 per cent. as men came in to make their fortunes. Land speculation flourished, and speculators grew rich by buying and selling land they had never seen.

Agricultural products brought high prices and the areas under coffee, sisal, flax and maize were eagerly expanded, as these figures show:

| *Crop* | *Year* | *Acres* |
|---|---|---|
| Coffee | 1914 | 5,000 |
| | 1921 | 33,813[1] |
| Sisal | 1914 | 7,500 |
| | 1921 | 31,050 |
| Maize | 1920 | 32,109 |
| | 1921 | 53,395 |
| Flax | 1919 | 9,247 |
| | 1921 | 26,475 |

Plans laid during the war to encourage new settlement came into operation, with special emphasis on ex-officers, who were considered to be men of the "right type."

In 1919 the Ex-Soldiers Settlement Scheme was launched, and 1,500 settlers were provided with farms free or on an easy purchase system. The scheme soon came to grief. Most of the land allocated had not been surveyed, many of the units lacked water, and a good proportion of the settlers had no farming experience whatsoever. So strong was their outcry that the Government seized good land occupied by the Africans to give to settlers who had had a raw deal. The Nandi, for instance, lost 32,000 acres of their best land.[2] By 1931 half or fewer of the original settlers under the scheme had survived, and many of them had had a hard time.[3]

[1] 1920–1 figures from 1921 Agricultural Census.

[2] *Kenya from Within*, McGregor Ross, p. 81.

[3] *Economic History of Tropical Africa*, Pim, 1941. See also Salvadori, p. 97.

Disabled officers were also victims in a special scheme (subscribed to by patriotic associations in Britain) to settle them in the Lumbwa-Kericho region, chiefly for the growing of flax, then commanding (1919–20) as high a price as £500 a ton. The sharp world crisis in 1921 tumbled the price down to £30 a ton and the settlement scheme fell with it. The land of the disabled officers was sold to the tea companies (who have done well out of it).

The sharp slump in 1921–2 gave way to world-wide recovery, in which Kenya shared. The prices of agricultural products rose once again, fresh capital was introduced into the country, land speculation once more brought big profits. The widespread illusion that world capitalism was now on an even keel, advancing towards prosperity, led the Government of Kenya to lavish expenditure on public buildings and new railroad construction in the settled areas. Between 1920 and 1930 a Public Debt of £17 million was created on which annual interest charges amounted to more than £1 million.

The prosperity of White Settlement based on the export of a limited number of agricultural products sold at high prices, internally subsidised and produced by cheap labour, received its severest check with the world economic crisis. The slump in the value of these products is shown in the following table:

TABLE 8

*Drop in Value of Agricultural Products, 1928–33*

| *Product* | *Unit* | | *(Value in £)* *1928* | *1933* | *Decrease, per cent.* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Coffee . . | ton | | 105·8 | 64·7 | 39 |
| Sisal . . | — | | 30·0 | 12·6 | 58 |
| Maize . . | cwt. | (shillings) | 7·06 | 3·78 | 46 |
| Hides . . | — | | 4·38 | 1·44 | 67 |
| Tea . . | — | | 10·54 | 4·39 | 58 |
| Sugar . . | — | | 32·26 | 16·20 | 50 |
| Wattle . . | ton | | 22·17 | 14·01 | 36 |
| Sodium Carbonate | — | | 5·15 | 4·53 | 12 |

Source: Salvadori.

The unit value of articles *imported* into Kenya during these years fell by no more than 11 per cent.[1] Thus the terms of trade moved

[1] *Report of Economic Development Committee*, p. 45.

sharply against Kenya. This meant that she had not only to produce and export more agricultural products and raw materials for very nearly the same quantity of imported manufactured goods, but in some cases drastically to reduce the acreages under what had become uneconomic crops, such as maize. Land values collapsed and domestic exports almost halved between 1930 and 1934.

A large number of settlers certainly felt the pinch. Many were shipped back to Britain with their families as Distressed British Subjects. When gold was discovered at Kakamega (in the Kavirondo Reserve), hundreds of bankrupt farmers flooded in hoping to redeem mortgages and lost capital by a lucky strike. The settlers who survived passed the burden on to the Africans in the shape of drastic wage cuts.

The area occupied reached its maximum in 1930 with 6,907,908 acres. From that year up to 1934 more acres were surrendered to the Government than were given in new concessions. The excess of land returned over that given in new concessions was 27,000 acres in 1931, rising to 102,000 acres in 1932.

Even the Second World War did not restore the area occupied to its 1930 level.

Many believe that White Settlement has never had a fair chance of establishing itself. This is disproved in the following pages.

## Assistance to White Settlement

"... If he is a man, he produces such a stir that he gets his communications. ..." Thus Major (now Lieut.-Colonel) E. S. Grogan in 1919, speaking to prospective settlers. They *were* men! From 1923–9, approximately 350 miles of railway were constructed for the benefit of European settlement. Having chosen to live many hundreds of miles from the coast, they could not produce for export without such rail construction. Up to 1922 there was only one branch line in the Highlands: Nairobi-Thika (thirty-two miles). In 1922 the Uasin-Gishu line began. The following year, work started on lengthening the Thika branch line to the north so as to bring into the circuit the settled area on the other side of the Kikuyu Reserve (this was completed in 1927). A branch line from Eldoret in Uasin-Gishu to Kitale in Trans-Nzoia was begun in 1924 and completed in 1926. In 1924 also a branch line was constructed from Rongai to Solai, and in 1928 a line was built from Gilgil along the Olbolossat Plains to Thomson's Falls (completed in 1929).

Of the £17 million raised in loans between 1920 and 1930, no less than £13 million has been invested in railway construction designed for the most part to assist 2,000 white farmers.

The entire policy of the railway was determined by these same 2,000 settlers. An official investigator wrote that "local pressure and influence were brought to bear upon management and construction, and that the ruling policy of cheap export rates, high import rates and differentiated rates in favour of locally produced commodities was inspired by political considerations rather than sound railway economics."[1]

With the early emphasis on cereal-growing, settler pressure succeeded in getting freight charges which subsidised bulky exports at the expense of other users of the railway. Between 1924–30 export rates on maize were reduced to 11 sh. a ton for any distance over 300 miles. The effect of this on railway policy and finance was well put by the General Manager: ". . . It will be noticed that certain comparatively small tonnages of high-valued imported goods pay very high rates indeed, and contribute a large proportion of the total revenue, while large tonnages of low-valued agricultural exports pay extremely low rates. On the one hand, the high rates . . . render the railway unduly vulnerable to road and air competition, and make it incumbent upon the governments, if the policy is to be maintained, to provide adequate protection by means of legislation. Furthermore, such high rates keep up unduly the cost of the commodities concerned, tending to increase the cost of living and the cost of manufacture where imported products are used.

"On the other hand, the assistance to agriculture for bulk crops is so great as to cause considerable difficulty financially when specially large tonnages have to be dealt with."[2] That is to say: the greater the exports the greater the loss! In 1930, for example, the quantity of maize exported was 2,222,528 cwt., compared with 764,769 cwt. the previous year. In the same year, however, the railway showed a deficit of £83,210, the first in ten years.

It was only to be expected that the crisis hit the railway finances with special severity. The first consideration, however, was the settlers. In 1930 the railway administration granted subsidies to wheat and maize industries of £53,900, part refund of railway export rates and £15,500 of refunded port storage charges.[3] The

[1] Mr. Gibb, *Report on Railway Rates and Finance in Kenya, Uganda and Tanganyika*, 1933.

[2] *Ibid.*

[3] Leggett.

railway deficit rose from £83,210 in 1930 to £378,184 in the following year, subsiding somewhat to £189,388 in 1932.[1] The Railway Report for the latter year stated: "Figures show conclusively none of the branch lines are yet paying, although a very favourable formula (under normal conditions) was adopted for giving credit to the branches for all traffic created by them." Even in 1935 a deficit on branch lines was announced of £23,795.

Road construction, too, strongly favoured the settlers. Trunk roads (all weather) were built to follow the railway. They serve admirably the needs of the European farms. These roads go from Nairobi to Mombasa and Nairobi to Nanyuku. Most recently a macadamised road constructed by Italian prisoners of war has been driven right through the "White" Highlands from Nairobi to Nakuru. But assistance in transport was only part of that given.

Particular attention was paid to possible competition by imports in *the domestic market and in 1923 import duties on maize, meal,* wheat, wheat flour, etc., were raised to 30 per cent. *ad valorem*; the duty on butter and cheese to 1 sh. per pound (roughly 100 per cent. *ad volorem*), etc., and the inwards rail rates on these articles were fixed at several times the rates charged for the same articles in the outward direction for export.[2]

With the onset of crisis, this assistance became more marked. The Government refunded four-fifths of the grading and inspection charges on maize and wheat of the 1929–30 crop amounting to £15,000.[2]

In his report on the financial situation in Kenya, Sir Alan Pim lists the following assistance given to European agriculturalists between 1929 and 1936:

| | £ |
|---|---|
| Agricultural advances | 101,057 |
| Unallocated stores | 43,786 |
| Loans to cereal industries | 116,090 |
| Refund of railway rates in respect of exported cereals | 35,000 |
| Rebate of paraffin for agricultural purposes | 86,306 |
| Refund of duty on wheat (to help milling industry) | 47,286 |
| Assistance to maintain export price of maize | 12,500 |

World War No. 2 no less than world crisis has led to increased subsidies for the white colonists.

"Since 1942 the Government has had powers under the Increased

[1] Frankel, p. 400. [2] Leggett. [3] Carter Report, Vol. 3, p. 3,075.

Production of Crops Ordinance to make direct subsidies to non-African farmers, and the amounts issued during 1942, or what it is estimated will be issued during this year, are as follows:

| | 1942 £ | 1943 £ |
|---|---|---|
| (1) Subsidies to guarantee a minimum return per acre for land placed under cultivation in certain crops at the order of the Government . | 480 | 7,000 |
| (2) Subsidies for the breaking up of new land | 35,208 | 90,000 |
| (3) Subsidies for fertilisers . . . . . | — | 20,000 |

"Subsidies in this form are not available to African cultivators, as the difficulties they were intended to meet do not occur in the farm operations customarily carried out in the Native Reserves."[1]

Africans, however, were producing increased crops of vegetables, maize, etc., in response to propaganda for increased food production.

In addition, generous guaranteed prices were fixed. A comparison between the 1939 market prices and the 1942 guaranteed prices[2] shows the following:

| | *1939* | *Guaranteed price, 1942* |
|---|---|---|
| Maize . . . . | Sh. 7/47 per bag | Sh. 8/45 per bag[3] |
| Wheat . . . . | Sh. 16/90 per bag | Sh. 24/- per bag |
| Sugar[4] . . . . | Sh. 24/- per bag | Sh. 29/74 per bag |
| Butter . . . . | 92–100 cts. per lb. | 123–25 cts. per lb. |
| Slaughter cattle . | 26 cts. per lb., (producer pays railage) | 34 cts. per lb. (purchaser pays railage) |
| Potatoes (price to Africans) . . | Sh. 7/- to 16/- per 200 lb. | Sh. 13/- to 16/- per 200 lb. |
| Coffee (average all grades) . . | Sh. 46/1 | Sh. 53/7 |

[1] Secretary of State in answer to question, November 3rd, 1943.

[2] *Kenya: White Man's Country?* Fabian Publications, 1944, p. 20.

[3] The 1939 Settlement Committee assumed that 5 sh. a bag of maize would be an economic price for prospective settlers.

[4] During the war, sugar was in short supply. Since it costs more to produce sugar in Kenya than in Uganda, the Government feared possible illicit movement of Uganda sugar into Kenya. It therefore decided to keep the consumer price in Kenya on par with that in Uganda, and made up the difference to the Kenya producer by a subsidy recovered by a tax on sugar consumed in the Colony, whether imported from Uganda or grown in Europe.

The measure of the assistance given may be seen in the fact that expenditure on European agricultural and veterinary services between 1931 and 1946 was almost four times that on the corresponding African services.

All this assistance has not availed to put White Settlement on a firm basis.

If the area under the chief European crops is examined, it will be seen that between 1929 and 1938 the area under coffee increased by only 4,000 acres, the area under maize fell by more than half; wheat and barley both dropped. Sisal, tea and pyrethrum alone showed any progress, but (sisal apart) the acreages involved were small.

The inability of the settlers to make full use of the land they had is shown in the following table of the percentage of land tilled but not harvested.

TABLE 9[1]

*Area Tilled but not Harvested*

('000 acres)

| *Year* (1) | *Area tilled* (2) | *Area harvested* (3) | *Area tilled but not cropped* (4) | *Col. (4) as percentage of col. (2)* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1924 | 345 | 297 | 50 | 15 |
| 1925 | 393 | 324 | 68 | 14 |
| 1926 | 464 | 401 | 63 | 14 |
| 1927 | 513 | 438 | 75 | 15 |
| 1928 | 593 | 525 | 67 | 11 |
| 1929 | 636 | 570 | 65 | 10 |
| 1930 | 644 | 564 | 79 | 12 |
| 1931 | 651 | 572 | 79 | 12 |
| 1932 | 614 | 519 | 94 | 15 |
| 1933 | 594 | 511 | 82 | 14 |
| 1934 | 556 | 479 | 77 | 14 |

Having failed in cereal production, the settlers turned towards pastoral dairy and pig products, hoping that these would prove more profitable.

Their financial plight during the crisis was revealed by a report on agricultural indebtedness made in 1932, which showed the following:

[1] Salvadori, p. 117.

| | |
|---|---|
| (1) Loans of joint-stock banks to agriculture in the Colony . . . . . . . | £2·2 million–£2·7 million |
| (2) Volume of indebtedness to private individuals and merchants estimated . . . | £2 million |
| Total agricultural debt . . . . . | £4–5 million |

To this must be added the loans advanced during and after the crisis by the Kenya Land and Agricultural Board, the Agricultural Advance Board, etc.

This debt of £4–5 million was contracted at around 8 per cent. per annum. Taking the farm value of produce sold by farmers at £2 million during the crisis *the annual interest charges on loans equalled 16–20 per cent. of the gross farm value of the produce.*[1]

It may not be far off the mark to say that the majority of European landholders in Kenya in 1939 were up to their necks in debt (mortgages and overdrafts). To what extent high wartime and post-war scarcity prices have helped to liquidate this indebtedness is not known.

## Survey of Main Agricultural and Pastoral Products

In the following pages we take each of the main crops and pastoral products in turn so that it may be shown more clearly that White Settlement is maintained only by the severest discrimination against the Africans.

*Maize.* The importance of maize-production in Kenya is a consequence of European settlement. It was regarded by the settlers as the most convenient crop to grow and also provide rations for their employees. An internal market was created by coffee, sisal and tea growers who also bought maize for their labour. Moreover, the Highlands were early regarded as suitable for producing maize for export, and by 1912–13 maize constituted 13 per cent. of the domestic exports.

Despite cheap labour, special railway facilities and protection from imports (as described above), it did not offer the profits expected of it. The price collapse of 1929 led to the European area under maize being halved in three years, while growing recognition that it was an erosion-conducing crop did not help its recovery. The following table tells the story:

[1] Carter Report, Vol. 3, p. 3,075: "Report of Committee of Board of Agriculture on Long-term Agricultural Credits."

TABLE 10

*European Maize Production and Yields*

| | *Area harvested, Acres* (1) | *Yield, bags* (2) | *Average yield, bags per acre* (3) | *Per cent. of domestic exports* (4) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1919–20 | 32,167 | 317,488 | 9·87 | 4 |
| 1926–27 | 177,987 | 1,314,643 | 7·39 | 16 |
| 1929–30 | 233,973 | 1,858,586 | 7·94 | 17 |
| 1937–38 | 113,103 | 965,076 | 8·56 | 8 |
| 1939–40 | 93,517 | 618,341 | 6·61 | 3 |
| 1941–42 | 63,100 | — | — | 2 |
| 1942–43 | 81,561 | 623,731 | 7·6 | — |

All data except col. 4 taken from *Food Shortage Commission Report, 1943*, Col. 4 taken from Pim up to 1930 and from annual trade reports for the rest.

The area under maize was not reduced in accordance with any plan. Coinciding with a deteriorating situation in the reserves, it led to famine among Africans in 1943. The Government began to encourage increased maize-production by Europeans, using such measures as breaking-grants and guaranteed prices. Yet, in spite of famine in the reserves, the dominant thought of the settlers has been to avoid competition from the Africans.

Their first step was to see that Africans did not receive the same encouragement to produce as the Europeans. Giving evidence before the Food Shortage Commission, Mr. C. R. Lockhart (now Sir Charles), Chairman of the East African Production and Supply Council, argued against paying African maize-growers the same price as European farmers. He said:

"One result of fixing a price [for the African grower—S. A.] based on consideration for the European grower was to make the growing of maize to the native so attractive that its production was very greatly stimulated. This, by increasing the export surplus, had the effect of reducing the pool, and either the internal price had to be raised again or the European grower went out. There might not be very much harm at the moment when increased production was wanted, but the consequences would come home to roost."[1] The African was not given the same price nor any of the special grants and subsidies.

[1] *E.A.S.*, May 14th, 1943.

This discrimination could not, of course, prevent the African growing maize for sale. He grew maize where possible, since it provided the main part of his food supply as well as being a "cash crop." The second step was to monopolise the maize trade in the African reserves, a step undertaken by the Kenya Farmers' Association, who market the bulk of European-grown cereals.

"The Kenya Farmers' Association (Co-op.) Ltd. has endeavoured for some years to persuade Government to introduce some form of maize control, and, having failed in their endeavours, decided to go into the native reserves and to trade in maize with the object of obtaining control of the whole of the maize in the Colony and thus be in a position to push up the local price to export parity or above that figure, also to make a profit on the native maize, and profit to go to subsidising the European-grown maize.

"This policy resulted in the Association's making a profit out of its trading in native maize and also in raising the price to the consumer and thus obtaining a higher price for European-grown maize sold in the Colony."[1] This is from a memorandum sent by the Maize Controller to the Maize Control Board.

When the Maize Control was instituted, it developed a separate organisation to carry out its trading, and did not use the K.F.A. as its official agent in the reserves. Thus frustrated, the K.F.A. campaigned against the Maize Control on grounds of unfair discrimination.[2] The real motive of their attack was revealed by both a Government official and a settlers' spokesman. The Acting Attorney-General declared in the Legislative Council[3] that "once the Control came in the K.F.A. would be no longer interested in trading in the native reserves, because the whole point of trading in the native reserves, the whole policy of the K.F.A. in trading in the native reserves, had been to force up the price of maize, and once Control came in that was no longer possible. . . ."

In the same debate, Mr. Bouwer (a European elected member) pressed for the abolition of the Maize Control on the grounds that this "will do away with the huge trading organisation which has been set up in opposition to the old established channels of trade."

The settlers succeeded in removing the Maize Controller (Lieut.-Colonel G. C. Griffiths), who had become doubly dangerous in

[1] *Report, Food Shortage Commission*, Appendix K, p. 119.

[2] The Acting Attorney-General reported that several of these charges were investigated and found lacking in substance. K.L.C., February 4th, 1944.

[3] *Ibid.*

that not only was he head of the Control, but was in close touch with a rival marketing concern, Mitchell Cotts and Co. Ltd.[1]

Since that time, their leader, Major Cavendish-Bentinck, has been appointed Member for Agriculture with considerable powers over African and European agriculture alike. The K.F.A. probably do not now fear that a control scheme would thwart their aims.[2] At the same time, they are seeking more direct means of monopolising African production by the registration of an African co-operative, of whose nine directors five would be appointed by the K.F.A. The other four would represent African interests, one being a European from the Nyanza area and one a European from Central Province. The other two would be Africans, one from each of these provinces.[3] The composition of this "co-operative" leaves us in no doubt that the offer to pay the same price for produce of equal quality irrespective of origin is merely bait to bring the African producer into the grip of the K.F.A.[4]

Meanwhile, the European maize-growers are only restrained from pushing up the price from 13/50 to 20 sh. a bag by the opposition of labour employers, for whom maize constitutes an important production-cost.[5]

Since 1919 *coffee* has been an export of great importance to Kenya. Though more than 800 European farmers grow coffee, half of them account for 75 per cent. of total production.

[1] The *Report of the Food Shortage Commission* came to the following conclusions: "From the above evidence we find that:

(1) The way in which the Chairman of the K.F.A. heard of the negotiations by Lieut.-Colonel Griffiths with Messrs. Mitchell Cotts and Co. Ltd. was such as to arouse the suspicions and fears of himself and the other directors of the K.F.A. that an organisation might be set up as a rival to the K.F.A., both as regards trading in maize and other produce in the native reserves, and this justified them in their lack of confidence in Lieut.-Colonel Griffiths as Maize Controller.

"(2) Lieut.-Colonel Griffiths, in his tentative proposals made to Messrs. Mitchell Cotts and Co. Ltd., favoured maize control being operated by that firm on an agency basis with their own servants in the native reserves.

"(3) Lieut.-Colonel Griffiths used his knowledge that he was likely to be appointed to a post under Government as Maize Controller to attempt to secure for himself a lucrative appointment with a commercial firm" (p. 88).

[2] See announcement on "cereals pool" by Cavendish-Bentinck, K.L.C., November 30th, 1945.

[3] *E.A. and Rh.*, February 14th, 1946.

[4] It appears that African producers are giving this scheme the "bird."

[5] See *E.A.S.*, February 28th, 1946.

The two main aims of the coffee-growers have been to prevent Africans becoming important producers and to keep prices high. Right at the very start an Ordinance passed, requiring every grower to take out an annual licence costing 15 rupees, at once excluded the vast majority of Africans. Moreover, the African was prohibited from growing arabica coffee (the kind grown by the Europeans) on grounds that African carelessness would cause coffee diseases to spread to the European farms and plantations. This prohibition was withdrawn in 1939, but only very limited acreages are allowed for Africans. Africans are allowed to grow coffee now in Meru and Kisii, where there are no European coffee-growers, but in Kiambu, where the Africans know how to grow coffee and have long been agitating for the right to plant, they have not been allowed to do so. European growers fear that, since arabica coffee brings a fair return, increased production by Africans would not only threaten their markets, but would diminish the flow of labour from the reserves.

In 1937, Brazilian price-cutting on the world coffee market launched European growers in Kenya into organised defence of their position in the U.K. market. This process has reached its highest level in the Coffee Marketing Ordinance (passed February, 1946). Its main features are:

1. The establishment of a Coffee Marketing Board, consisting of (*a*) two members appointed by the Governor; (*b*) one member appointed by the existing Coffee Board; (*c*) six coffee-planters to be elected by Conference in the manner prescribed.

2. Subject to the provisions of the Ordinance, (*a*) no coffee-planter shall export coffee; (*b*) no coffee-planter shall sell coffee to any person other than the Board; (*c*) no person other than the Board shall purchase coffee from any coffee-planter.

The Ordinance allows for trading interests to be represented on a special Advisory Panel. African coffee-growers are excluded.

Needless to say, the Africans fiercely resent this discrimination and constantly voice their protests.[1]

From a small beginning in the 1930's, *pyrethrum* (used as an insecticide), now Kenya's No. 1 export, valued at almost £1 million in

[1] In the K.L.C., July 25th, 1945, Mr. Mathu stated: "... There has long been an outstanding grievance in the African community in respect to the very great restraint which has been imposed on the Africans in respect to the growing of coffee.... I would like to put before this Council ... whether Your Excellency is of the opinion that the time has come when the restrictions on the growing of this most economic crop by the African community can be removed."

1945 forms a very high proportion of the total world supply. When the settlers realised how profitable pyrethrum was, they flung themselves into its production. Between 1936 and 1938, when the area under maize and coffee decreased, that under pyrethrum increased by 76 per cent. and the need for control became apparent. An Ordinance passed in 1938 established a Board with wide powers to allow or disallow production. All growers require a licence from the Director of Agriculture, at an annual cost of 50 sh.

There is no doubt that Africans have been carefully excluded. In 1943, out of 989 licence-holders, only eleven were Africans.[1] It is the settlers' plain intention to reserve this profitable crop (whose future is guaranteed until the end of 1947) for returning European Servicemen and new settlers,[2] while avoiding too great an increase in production. Even so, without a guaranteed market the future of pyrethrum is uncertain owing to competitive insecticides, such as D.D.T.

We have already noted the increased emphasis now placed on *dairy-farming* and the *pig industry*. It is well known that in every country, when living standards are improving, the diet of the people includes more milk, butter, meat and so on. Nowhere more than in East Africa is there urgent need for such improvement in the diet of the people. But again the familiar cycle is repeated. The European farmers will not increase the pay of their labourers; the general level of wages does not allow the Africans any large increase in the consumption of these "protective foods." Twenty thousand Europeans, however rich and greedy, can only form a narrow base on which to build a large dairy and pig industry. Exports are chosen as the *solution: butter in the one case and pig products in the other.* The producers safeguard their position in the internal market by protective duties (on the import of butter) and a butter levy, both of which are meant to subsidise them. Before the war the absurd position existed where "... it is quite clear that the export market represents a loss to the Colony on every pound of butter exported overseas. A loss which is being paid in part by the local consumer and in part by those dairy farmers who are unable to cover their costs in the present pay-out."[3]

In the case of dairy products, the greater part of it (78 per cent. in

[1] *E.A. and Rh.*, October 21st, 1943.

[2] Cf. discussion at Annual Production Conference, *E.A.S.*, March 6th, 1946.

[3] *Economic Development Committee, Minority Report*, p. 270.

1938)[1] is controlled by the Kenya Co-operative Creamery Ltd. Compulsory marketing of the pig industry was legislated in 1945, establishing a statutory Pig Control Board having wide powers and with strong elected representation of producers. Since African production contributed between 1941–4 no more than 5 per cent. to total pig deliveries, the Board will be dominated by the European pig-producers and become the instrument of their plans.[2]

The only two other agricultural products of importance are *sisal*[3] and *tea*, both produced (almost exclusively) by limited companies on fairly big estates.

In the inter-war years sisal has fluctuated from 8 to 26 per cent. of the value of Kenya's domestic exports. Its expansion after 1920 was part of an effort by Britain to break the semi-monopoly of Mexican sisal, which was financed by Mexican and U.S. banking syndicates. These syndicates determined world prices under the supervision, it was assumed, of the U.S. Government.[4] Since 1941 sisal has been in great demand for replacing manila hemp, but the benefits accrue of course to a handful of joint-stock companies and individuals such as Dwa Plantations (owning three estates); Sisal Estates Ltd. (controlling sisal estates in Tanganyika also); Lieut.-Colonel Grogan, who has interests in the large Ziwani and Taveta and Jipe sisal estates mentioned in regard to African resettlement at Taveta. Big mercantile firms, such as Mitchell Cotts Ltd., are known to have substantial and controlling interests in certain sisal estates.

During the war the sisal labour force has been guaranteed by conscription, while it has received financial assistance from the Government in the shape of an annual grant-in-aid and half of the costs of research.[5] It is expected that the demand for sisal will continue to exceed supply for several years, but already it is being

[1] *Report on Reorganisation of Dairy Industry*, 1938.

[2] "As an example, we would quote the pig industry, where there is the possibility of the export of considerable quantities of frozen carcases which are not likely to realise as favourable a price as pig products marketed for local consumption. It is accordingly desirable, in the interests of the pig-producers, that a pool should be formed and to which the loss on the export of pig produce would be set off against the profit on local sales." *Interim Report on Development*, p. 8.

[3] Used chiefly for rope, marine cordage, binder twine, etc.

[4] *African World*, December 5th, 1925.

[5] Member for Agriculture, K.L.C., November 30th, 1945.

suggested that "in the absence of international control which would be extremely difficult to achieve, the British Government would eventually have to subsidise producers."[1]

Just before the war, tea had become as important an export as sisal, but its production was restricted by the international tea agreement, which shared out quotas among the producing countries. The great bulk of the production is at Kericho on ground taken over from the disastrous Ex-Servicemen's Settlement Scheme. Four companies control the major output (three of whom in 1935 employed 7,902 labourers out of a total of 9,477 employed on the Kericho plantations). These companies are: The African Highlands Produce Co. Ltd., a Scottish firm owning 5,060 acres, the directors of which also have considerable interests in Great Indian and Ceylonese tea companies, with a combined capital of £7,750,000; Kenya Tea Co. Ltd. (Brooke Bonds); Lord Egerton of Tattons (Jamji Estate); and the Buret Tea Co., which rarely pays less than a 40 per cent. dividend.

The heavy capital investment required for both tea and sisal effectively excludes African participation.

Before drawing our final conclusions from White Settlement, we should note the scheme for establishing 500 new settlers which is now being vigorously pressed ahead.

The new scheme is in two parts:

(1) A tenant farming scheme for ex-Servicemen, with first priority to Kenya nationals. This is "designed to allow men with limited capital to make the best use of that capital by investing the whole of it in those working assets, such as livestock and machinery, by which economic production is maintained."[2]

(2) An assisted ownership scheme, "designed for those men who prefer to be owners *ab initio*, and who, in the opinion of the Settlement Board, have adequate capital resources."[3]

The total financial provision is £1,600,000; the greater part of £1 million will be lent to settlers on a long-term basis, and £600,000 will be invested in purchase of land for the tenant farming schemes on which a return in rent is expected.

Most attention appears to be given to mixed farming with emphasis on dairying.

Another scheme is that of residential plots for retired officials

[1] Mr. A. Nelsh, at discussion of East African section of the London Chamber of Commerce, reported *Crown Colonist*, May, 1946.

[2] *Land Utilisation and Settlement*, p. 12. [3] *Ibid.*, p. 12.

and others who desire to live in a pleasant climate where servant troubles are unknown(!) and income tax minimal.[1]

## Some Conclusions

Sufficient material has been presented to allow us to draw some conclusions as to the trend of settler agricultural economy.

It has been maintained with extreme difficulty on the basis of cheap or free land; Government subsidies; and a policy of maintaining wages below subsistence level.

Since export prices of agricultural products have been unstable, exports are subsidised in most cases out of the pockets of consumers in Kenya, who can therefore afford to buy less. This narrowing of the internal market sharpens the drive for exports and reinforces the settlers' opposition to wage increases.

To prevent competition from Africans (or "lone-wolf" producers) the European settlers have sought and secured Government backing for setting up marketing and other boards, with wide powers to control domestic prices and production. The aim is complete and legalised control by the European farmers of all agricultural and pastoral production.[2]

A close association of the settlers with the Government machine was formed during the war through supply and other committees, on which the settlers were in a majority. The most important of these has been the Agriculture and Settlement Board, presided over by Major Cavendish-Bentinck, former settlers' leader. Moreover, a grouping of departments has taken place, and Cavendish-Bentinck now sits on the Legislative and Executive Councils as Member for Agriculture, Annual Husbandry and Natural Resources.

Our objections to White Settlement (and in particular to *new* White Settlement) may be stated as follows:

(1) Contrary to oft-repeated claims, it has not developed fully

[1] See *Report of Residential Settlement Sub-Committee*.

[2] The Kenya Government has been advised by a Government committee that "the East African governments, on being satisfied that it is the wish of the majority of the producers in any agricultural industry, should be prepared to promote similar legislation to provide for the collective marketing of the product concerned on an East African basis under the control of a board appointed by the producers, with such Government participation as may be appropriate in each case . . . due regard should be paid to the legitimate claims of trade interests. . . . We suggest that the arrangements made in connection with each industry be self-contained. . . ." *Interim Report on Development*, pp. 8–9.

the agricultural and pastoral resources of the country even of that part it occupies.

(2) It stifles the proper expansion of African economy, which alone could open up the resources of the country. At every stage it conflicts with the interests of the Africans: (*a*) frustrating African land needs; (*b*) obstructing an expansion of African production; (*c*) maintaining low wages.

(3) Its main beneficiaries have been *British banks and merchants.* They have gained at the expense of the European farmers by terms of trade unfavourable to raw material and agricultural producers. To them has been paid millions in fixed interest charges and mortgage payments. The large landowners (many of them absentee) stand to gain everything by increased settlement, and are its fierce protagonists. Closer settlement would heighten the value of their land. Already they seek to profiteer by the "land-hunger" of Europeans.[1]

On all accounts, existing settlement has not justified itself. Still less is there a place for new settlement. The scheme now being operated will mean an immediate increase of 25 per cent. in the number of farmers *at this stage*. The leaders of White Settlement aim far beyond this. It has been sharply raised on the Legislative Council that even land now occupied by the Africans be handed over for White Settlement.[2] The settlers fear that without a large increase in their numbers they will not achieve full power and will fail to hold down the Africans. Hence the speed to resettle Africans on arid, tsetse-infested, unproven lands.

## African Land-hunger and the Highlands

The mere suggestion that Africans should enter the Highlands as free cultivators arouses apoplectic anger among the wealthy leaders

[1] The East African Lands and Development Co. Ltd., for instance, had in 1941 39,742 acres still unsold. They have been taking advantage of European "land-hunger" to attempt to get prices for their land "considerably higher than could possibly enable the purchasers to have a reasonable chance of success on sound farming methods, and it was believed that the subdivisions in question were not capable of providing economic units at the purchase prices agreed upon . . ." (letter from C. E. Mortimer, Commissioner of Lands up to December 31st, 1945, to *E.A. and Rh.*, March 21st, 1946).

The effect of all this will no doubt be to inflate the amounts eventually paid for the land required, especially since these values are being judged by a committee composed of settlers who are also keenly interested in property values.

[2] Raised on K.L.C., April 12th, 1944, referring to Leroki Plateau, involving over 1 million acres.

of the settlers. Proposals to lease (temporarily) 200,000 acres of unoccupied and uncultivated land in the "White" Highlands to the Wakamba and to grant 5,000 acres of similar land belonging to Teita Concessions Ltd. for resettling numbers of the Teita tribe have had to be shelved, so fierce was the opposition they created. In all countries which are overwhelmingly agrarian, the advance of democracy makes the co-existence of huge estates and a landless peasantry intolerable. It is even less tolerable in Kenya, where these landlords are aliens.

Agrarian reform should be carried out in two stages. The first stage involves the acquisition for African resettlement of half the area of natural pasture, together with the land alienated but not occupied.

We estimate the absorptive capacity of this land as follows:

| | |
|---|---|
| (1) Assume that, instead of 9 acres of natural pasture per beast, only 4½ acres is allowed. This releases . . . . . | 1,704,989 acres |
| (2) Of the 2,219,615 acres given as alienated but not occupied, assume ⅓rd to be suitable for resettlement. This gives | 739,871 acres |
| | 2,444,860 acres |

Allowing 27½ acres per family, 90,550 families, or 453,000 persons, could be resettled. Since there were 202,000 squatters (men, women and children) already living in the Highlands in 1945 to whom we would wish to give land of their own, the net resettlement from the reserves would be 250,000 persons. There is also land classified as occupied which is undeveloped. This too should be acquired for resettlement.

African leaders have voiced their support for such reforms. "They also opposed all suggestion of inviting new settlers to Kenya on the grounds that there was a land-shortage and if the European community had more land than could be utilised it would be fair to allot the surplus to landless Africans rather than to invite foreigners to come and occupy land 'while the owners were suffering.' They asked for the return of unused land in the Highlands to Africans." Thus Mr. F. J. Khamisi, General Secretary of the Kenya Africa Union.[1] It is quite certain, however, that agrarian reform will

[1] Reported *E.A.S.*, February 8th, 1946. This was also the view of the Fabian Colonial Bureau: "... Definite steps should be taken to ease the land position in the African reserves by leasing some of the valuable land in the Highlands for the occupation of the African population." (*Kenya: White Man's Country?*, 1944, p. 31.)

ultimately go beyond the first stage and dissolve the large estates left in the remaining 2½ million acres (approx.), which certainly includes the very best and most fertile land in the Highlands. The existence of these large estates confers on their owners overweighted political as well as economic power, which must be broken.

Such a redistribution of land as we have proposed above would have a beneficial expanding effect on the economy of the country. Its aim must be not an extension of subsistence farming, but the building up of an internal as well as an external market in which the African farmers would exchange their agricultural products and raw materials for manufactured goods and with each other. Agrarian reform is a prerequisite for such expansion. It would help to destroy the conflict in the reserves between food and "cash crops." In permitting many thousands of African farmers to produce for the market, it would stimulate the demand for better food and the whole range of manufactured goods which can advance their standards of life. Alongside the development of industry and services, it would provide the most important market for such industry and services.

An examination of Kenya's exports shows that the African producer could easily overtake the present level. Food exports would, of course, be eliminated so long as famine and shortage exists in any part of the territory. But such exports of maize, wheat and maize, meal and flour, butter and beans amounted to only 4 per cent. of the value of domestic exports in 1944. The great bulk of Kenya's exports consists of pyrethrum, coffee, sisal and tea. The areas under these crops are by no means the maximum, and there is suitable land on which to double their production if it were in the interests of the Africans to do so. Even with the present situation in the reserves only official and unofficial restrictions have prevented an expansion in the growing of coffee and pyrethrum by Africans, while their poverty (plus the restrictions) has prevented their cultivating sisal and tea.

Moreover, the "traditional" African exports, such as hides and skins, wattle bark and extract, have a bright future and are capable of expansion. Research, too, will certainly suggest other means of using the natural resources of the country, while fruit-growing, cedar-exporting, etc., are already growing in importance and should be developed under African control.

These exports would then benefit a far greater number than the 2,000 European farmers and their families. Through such exports,

valuable machinery and fertilisers could be imported for improving agricultural techniques and establishing local industries.

But to achieve this, resettlement should be organised so as to promote high productivity on the basis of good farming methods.

The planning and guidance should come from a settlement committee on which Africans have a majority and on which chosen representatives of the African local authorities would sit, together with technical and financial experts.

The existing Producers' Boards and Committees would require thorough reorganisation so as to bring in and represent the African producer, while the post of Member for Agriculture should not be held by a European settler. All measures and ordinances which in *practice are measures of racial discrimination should* be repealed.

Resettlement will require financial and technical assistance on the scale considered normal for the European farmers. Special incentives should be offered to Africans who, while farming their individual holdings, engage also in co-operative production for the market. Such incentives could include: credit from the Land Bank at low rates of interest; some measure of priority for importation of agricultural machinery, pedigree cattle, etc.; the service of machinery pools (tractor stations, etc.) Special schemes should also be worked out for co-operative growing of "plantation crops," such as sisal, tea, sugar-cane and coffee. New licences for pyrethrum and coffee should be reserved for Africans.

It is perhaps at this point that we can best discuss the vast and important scheme for the production of ground-nuts in East Africa, announced towards the end of 1946.[1] Inspired by the shortage of fats in Britain and throughout the world, the plan envisages expenditure by the British Government of £25 million in order to cultivate, by mechanical means, 3 million acres in Tanganyika as well as substantial acreages in Kenya and Northern Rhodesia. Annual production within a few years is placed at 400,000 to 500,000 tons, requiring a labour force of not less than 50,000 (of which over 30,000 will be employed in Tanganyika).

"It is the Government's intention," said Mr. Strachey, the Minister responsible, "that the full undertaking, should it be initiated, shall be owned and financed entirely by His Majesty's Government, probably through a Government-owned corporation. But in order to get the work in Africa going without delay, I have

[1] What follows on the ground-nuts scheme was inserted during revision of proofs.

invited the United Africa Company to act as managing agents for the present limited scheme pending a decision on the long term project."[1]

We have here an excellent illustration of the meaning of colonial status. Lethargy is put aside and amazing energy and resourcefulness displayed solely because the ground-nuts scheme is in the interests of the British Government. Without any consultation with the *peoples* of these territories, Britain has decided on a scheme which, it is acknowledged, will have tremendous repercussions on the economic and social life of these territories. Moreover, in the case of Tanganyika, the ground-nuts scheme violates Britain's pledge under Chapter XII of the United Nations Charter to act in accordance with the "freely expressed wishes of the people concerned."

The scheme, as announced so far, is open to two major criticisms.

First, it makes East Africa even more dependent on Britain, since it will base East African (and certainly Tanganyikan) economy on the production for export of a single agricultural product. It will thus add to the instability of the region's economy, unless accompanied by a far reaching plan of industrial development.[2]

Second, the employment of the United Africa Company (a subsidiary of Unilevers) as managing agents, is a guarantee of African hostility to the scheme. It marks another stage in the expansion of the Unilever empire in Africa.[3]

[1] House of Commons, November 25th, 1946.

[2] *Note that price fluctuations in ground-nuts, as in other primary products,* have been very severe, falling from £7 10s. before 1929 to £2 10s. in 1934. Furthermore, "the demand for such commodities for palm or ground-nut oil is uncertain, because they are highly competitive with the oil from such products as kapok, cotton and tallow . . . [the] variability of the demand for the by-products of palm and ground-nuts adds a further element of uncertainty." Forde and Scott, *The Native Economies of Nigeria,* 1946, pp. 140, 143, 219.

[3] Mr. Geoffrey Heyworth, presiding at the Annual General Meeting of Lever Brothers and Unilever Limited, November 29th, 1946, stated: "We turn next to the Belgian Congo. We are now completing the last stage of a programme, started in 1937, for the planting of 82,000 acres with oil palms. . . . In French Equatorial Africa we are undertaking, in partnership with the French Colonial Government and French banking interests, the establishment of the first large-scale oil palm plantation in that territory. . . . The United Africa Company will be responsible for its management. . . . We have decided to extend our soap factory at Apapa in western Nigeria, and to establish a new one at Port Harcourt to serve the eastern part of the colony. In the Belgian Congo a new factory is to be built at Alberta to serve the north and east, and the existing factory at Leopoldville is to be extended.

In the form proposed, the ground-nuts scheme brings with it many serious dangers for the peoples of East Africa. If the above criticisms are recognised, the following safeguards and additional proposals are required for the scheme to be satisfactory to the Africans and to lead to a growth in the wealth and income of the people.

1. The scheme must be accompanied by a plan for the all-round economic development of the region.

2. If it is possible to clear land of bush and tsetse-fly on the scale proposed, that land should be made available to African farmers, working on a co-operative basis and assisted by cheap credits, machinery pools and other aids. That part of the managing and processing which requires direct labour should be controlled directly by the Government and combined with large-scale training schemes for African managers and technicians. The employment of the United Africa Company is completely unacceptable.

3. The scheme must yield direct as well as indirect benefits to the African populations in the form of increased social services, training schemes, importation of machinery and equipment to meet their needs.

4. All processing should take place in East Africa. Immense quantities of cheap stock feed would then be available. Nowhere is this more needed than in East Africa to-day. Every form of stock-breeding would benefit. The expansion of mixed and dairy farming would become easier.

5. The conditions and payment of any labour employed must be exemplary. It must show the way to a new wages structure throughout East Africa. This is the only basis on which recruitment of labour should take place.

6. Finally, but most important, immediate consultations must be

We shall enter a new field by building a soap factory at Abidjan to serve the French Ivory Coast. In East Africa, too, the time has come when the local manufacture of soap and edible products should be undertaken. . . . We have decided, subject to Treasury consent, to put down a combined seed-crushing unit and soap and edible oil factory at Kampala, 800 miles from the sea, in the heart of the cotton-growing area. Its production of soap and edible oils will meet a substantial proportion of the requirements of Uganda and parts of Kenya and Tanganyika. . . . Another East African project is the addition of the necessary expert staff and special plant to enable our construction company in Nairobi to undertake water-boring contracts." *The Times*, November 30th, 1946. British diplomacy may have found it impossible to build a "Western *bloc*," but an international monopoly such as Unilevers surmounts many of the diplomatic obstacles.

held with the Africans of the three territories to explain and hear opinions on the scheme as well as to ensure that African land rights are not violated. A clear declaration should be made that the British Government intends the scheme to pass entirely into the hands of the Africans themselves and be part of their preparation for self-government.

Unless these conditions are satisfied, it will not be possible to regard the scheme as a contribution to the development of the African peoples of these territories.

If, in Kenya, these measures were combined with those proposed above for resettlement in the Highlands, the producing and exporting capacity of the African farmer would be beyond doubt. Given long-term bulk-purchase contracts of the principal exports, the industrial and agricultural reconstruction of the country could be planned and sustained.

For Kenya, however, the ground-nuts scheme cannot obscure the fact that African resettlement in the Highlands is an economic and political necessity which will be frustrated only at the cost of bitter and uncompromising conflict between the African people and those who oppress them.[1]

[1] Not only are professed European farmers in possession of African land. The missions have increasingly encroached on African territory within the reserves, and in many cases are using the land, not for religious and educational purposes, but for commercial gain. The *Register of Coffee Estates*, published by the Coffee Board of Kenya in 1937, showed that sixteen Catholic Missions, two Church of Scotland Missions, one C.M.S. Mission, two American Quaker Missions, a canon and an archdeacon were engaged in coffee-growing—with African labour, of course. Coffee-growing is not their only commercial undertaking. Their activities include cereal- and fruit-growing, timber-producing, saw-milling, dairy-farming and grain- and flour-milling. In the Kikuyu and North Kavirondo Reserves, their land-holdings are greatest.

CHAPTER VII

# ALL MEN MUST WORK

LONG before "full employment" became a popular slogan in the advanced capitalist countries, it was the main objective of Kenya's administration and settlers—for the Africans. This is because European life in Kenya is impossible without African labour. The exploitation of the African in East Africa is different from that in West Africa. In West Africa this exploitation has been through large trading monopolies preying on millions of small producers, whereas in Kenya the Africans are exploited primarily as wage-labourers on European farms and estates. This exploitation in East Africa has two main consequences. First, it has retarded the development of small-scale production by Africans for the market. Secondly, a money economy in Kenya has developed, not as a result of the growth of exchange based on small-scale production for the market, but as a result of a taxation policy which compelled the African to become a wage-earner.

## EARLY PROBLEMS AND POLICIES

When European settlement began, the Africans, sparse in number because of famine and plague, lived in a subsistence economy. They were uninterested in work for wages. By 1905 the increase in settlers and the needs of railway construction made the labour shortage acute. Led by Lord Delamere, the settlers began a sanctimonious campaign against idleness. Their pressure on the Government brought an announcement that administrative officers "would do their best to supply labour for settlers, planters, contractors and others"[1] on specified terms. But specified terms were just what the settlers wished to avoid. They campaigned fiercely for the right to treat "their" labour as they wished, and backed up their demands by demonstrations, threats and a call for the Governor to resign. In regard to the supply of labour, their demands crystallised into the following: (1) land curtailment; (2) increased taxation; (3) labour on contract, with penalties for infringement; (4) full Government support for the policy of driving Africans out to work. After some show of resistance, these demands were met.

1. *Land Curtailment.* The land Committee of 1905 had already expressed the view that the native reserves should be fixed inviolably,

[1] Cmd. 5194, 1910, p. 47.

so that excess population should overflow to meet labour demands.[1] The reserve boundaries were fixed, but not inviolably, as the Africans found to their cost.

2. *Increased Taxation*. In 1908 the Governor decided to institute a poll tax on all males not paying the existing hut tax. This was to be remitted for work. Then a combined hut and poll tax amounting to 16 sh., later reduced to 12 sh., was imposed. As each taxpayer had to pay according to the number of his dependants, the sum due worked out much higher than 12 sh. (Norman Leys estimates it at 30 sh.). Since tax default was punished by forced labour or detention and wages were not more than 8 sh. to 12 a month, a regular supply of labour was assured. A discriminatory policy in agricultural assistance ensured that most Africans could not pay their taxes by developing cash crops. The deliberate use of taxation to increase the labour supply was well put by a leading article in the *East African Standard*:

"We consider that taxation is the only possible method of compelling the native to leave his reserve for the purpose of seeking work. Only in this way can the cost of living be increased for the native, and as we have previously pointed out, it is on this that the supply of labour and the price of labour depends. To raise the rate of wages would not increase, but would diminish the supply of labour. A rise in the rate of wages would enable the hut or poll tax of a family, sub-tribe, or tribe to be earned by fewer external workers. . . ."[2]

The effect of the unremitting settler clamour on this issue, can be seen in the following instance.

One of the difficulties experienced by settlers was that of obtaining labourers at harvest time, when the Africans were busy harvesting on their own account in the reserves. So in 1925 a suggestion was quickly forthcoming that the collection of the hut tax should synchronise with the seasons during which there was maximum demand for labour![3]

3. *Labour on Contract, with Penalties for Infringement*. Labourers who deserted as soon as they had earned enough to pay their taxes were no use to the settlers. To meet their demands, the Government in 1919 put into effect a Native Registration Ordinance which compelled all Africans over the age of sixteen to register by giving a set of fingerprint impressions, which were then forwarded to a Central Fingerprint Bureau. By this method, nearly all deserters

[1] H. L. Paper, No. 1, pp. 6, 15. [2] *E.A.S.*, February 8th, 1913.
[3] *Interim Report, Economic and Finance Committee*, 1925, pp. 2–7.

could be traced and returned to their employers if they broke a labour contract. Fines and imprisonment were imposed for a host of minor labour offences. Another form of compulsion took shape in vagrancy laws which operated against Africans who left the reserves without becoming wage-earners.

4. *Government Support for providing Labour for Private Employers.* The settlers had arrived in Kenya with the encouragement of the British Government. They could not turn up an acre without African labour. They insisted that it was the task of the officials to provide this labour. And in fact the official machine has been geared to this task from the first days of White Settlement to the present time. The only question ever in dispute has been method.

An editorial in the *East African Standard*[1] expressed the current opinion of the settlers:

"Is it our duty to allow these natives to remain in uneducated and unproductive idleness in their so-called reserves? I think not. I believe that our duty is to encourage the energies of all communities to produce from these rich lands the raw products and the foodstuffs that the world at large, and the British Empire in particular, require. This can only be done by the encouragement of the thousands of able-bodied natives to work with the European settler for the cultivation of the land and the improvement of stock."

By 1917 the Governor of the time was agreeing that, by "humane and properly regulated pressure on the reserves,"[2] Africans should be induced to work for private employers. By 1919 the famous Northey Labour Circular was recommending the use of "every possible lawful influence" to get labour, including women and children.

The next stage was reached after public indignation in Britain had blown both Northey and his circular out of Kenya. The *dual policy* was announced: fullest development both inside and outside the reserves. Needless to say, the settlers' economic and political power decided which policy was to be dominant, and as dispatches came and went the administration proceeded with the job of providing labour.

Forced labour legislation[3] represented the peak of the Government's efforts on the settlers' behalf. Ostensibly forced labour was

[1] *E.A.S.*, February 8th, 1913. [2] Hailey, p. 640.

[3] The 1920 Amendment to Native Authority Ordinance of 1912, provided for the requisition of paid African porters, and other forms of labour for sixty days in the year.

for direct Government purposes. In effect, the nature of the legislation drove the Africans into the waiting hands of the private employers. Exemption was to be given to those fully employed in some other occupation (i.e. wage-earning) or who had been employed for three out of the preceding twelve months. Since compulsory labour might be imposed on the African at any time, e.g. at harvest; he increasingly found it preferable to work for the settler in his own time and thus avoid compulsion. And even the African impressed for Government work might be enriching the settler, since many of these added to their incomes in those days by acting as sub-contractors for the Government.[1] Between 1920 and 1927 the number of labour units per month employed on European holdings increased from 53,709 to 102,074.[2] Little wonder that "not the least attractive feature of Kenya life from the prospective settler's point of view is the actual and potential supply of labour"![3]

And so the war on idleness continued. Even the children were not left without protection against this vice. In 1927 a Native Labour Commission advocated juvenile labour, suggesting that it would benefit the children by providing discipline and training as well as better living conditions.[4]

By the 1930's, Government and settlers together had achieved the creation of a great unskilled labour force, driven from home by taxation, land shortage and legislation, kept under control by the threat of heavy penalties, and paid at rates that made machinery seem an unnecessary extravagance.

## MANPOWER: SIZE AND DISTRIBUTION[5]

We have already seen how increasing numbers of African labourers worked for wages during the 'twenties as a result of Government "encouragement." The depression years saw unemployment but soon the figures of Africans in employment away from home showed an even more startling increase than during the previous decade. As the following table shows, the number of adult males in contract employment rose from 132,000 in 1932 to 254,757 in 1945 (actually to 334,012 if all adult males in civil and military

[1] Cf. McGregor Ross, *Kenya from Within*, p. 109.

[2] Agricultural Census and Reports.

[3] *Kenya Land Settlement Advisory Committee Report*, 1923.

[4] *Report, Labour Commission*, 1927, pp. 28–9.

[5] Most of the information in this section comes from the 1944 and 1945 Labour Census.

employment are included). If we use the method of the 1945 Labour Census, for estimating the number of available able-bodied adult males, the 1932 figures represent 26 per cent. of the potential labour force, while the 1945 figures represent 40 per cent. (52 per cent. if males in all employment, civil and military, are included). The figures for the war years include men conscripted under the Defence Regulations (African Labour for Essential Services) of 1942. The number of conscripts rose from 2,595 in July, 1942, to 21,903 in January, 1945.[1]

TABLE II

*Number of Male Adults Yearly in Employment*

| *Year* | *Estimated native population* (1) | *No. of able-bodied adult males, 1945 Labour Census basis* (2) | *Registered adult males in employment* (3) | *Total No. of adult males in employment, civil and military* (4) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1929 | 2,899,261 | 456,354[2] | 160,000 | — |
| 1932 | 3,007,645 | 516,026 | 132,000 | — |
| 1933 | 3,004,141 | 515,535 | 141,000 | — |
| 1934 | 3,024,975 | 519,185 | 145,000 | — |
| 1935 | 3,012,421 | 516,956 | 150,000 | — |
| 1936 | 3,186,976 | 546,901 | 182,000 | — |
| 1937 | 3,253,689 | 558,359 | 183,000 | — |
| 1938 | 3,280,777 | 563,007 | 182,964 | — |
| 1939 | 3,253,689 | 558,359 | 188,401 | — |
| 1940 | 3,413,371 | 585,761 | — | — |
| 1941 | 3,412,158 | 585,553 | 208,088 | 276,607 |
| 1942 | 3,455,000. | 593,905 | 244,590 | — |
| 1943 | 3,596,575 | 617,202 | 248,426 | 359,408 |
| 1944 | 3,596,000 | 617,096 | 250,407 | — |
| 1945 | 3,825,000 | 642,910 | 254,757 | 334,012 |

(1) Figures taken mainly from *Native Affairs Reports* and 1945 Labour Census.

(2) 1945 Census took 22·58 per cent. of total population as total number of males between sixteen and forty-five years. Eighty per cent. of this number were considered able-bodied. (Probably too high an estimate, considering low nutritional level, incidence of diseases, such as hookworm, etc.—S. A.) Five per cent. of this figure was discounted as representing the Turkana and N.F.D. tribes.

(3) Years 1932–9 from *Native Affairs Report*; 1941 and 1943, from Noon, *Labour Problems of Africa*, 1944; 1942 from *Kenya Labour Department Report*, 1944; and 1945, from Labour Census, 1945.

(4) All figures from Labour Census, 1945.

[1] Orde Browne.

[2] Calculated on the old basis.

These overall figures do not give a true picture of the depletion of the reserves, since some tribes, such as the Masai, provide none or few wage-workers, while two main groups, the Kikuyu and the Kavirondo supply the bulk of the labour force. In 1933 it was estimated that 62 per cent. of the able-bodied male population of the Kikuyu of Kiambu, 74 per cent. of the Nandi, 43 per cent. of the Lumbwa of Kericho and 38 per cent. of the North Kavirondo[1] left the reserves as labourers. In 1944, 47·58 per cent. of the Bantu Kavirondo were in registered employment.[2] But registered wage-earners do not constitute the entire labour force. Unregistered male juveniles at work numbered 48,729 in 1941.[3] Daily casuals numbered almost 16,000 in 1945. It was recorded with satisfaction in the 1945 Labour Census that the grand total of "bodies" at work was 379,286.[4]

When the total drain from the reserves is considered, it is clear why the original economy of African society has been disrupted to a considerable extent.

## Distribution of Labour Force

Table 12 (p. 104) gives in more detail the occupational distribution of the wage-earners.

### *Agricultural Labour*

The overwhelming majority of agricultural labourers are employed on the European estates and farms entering on contracts which entail their absence from the reserves for many months in each year. There are, however, certain classes of agricultural workers who deserve special attention.

There are, first of all, the "squatters." These are African families who have an agreement with the European land-holders whereby they are "allowed to settle on a specified area, pasture cattle and cultivate crops in return for a varying period of service on the landlord's plantation each year."[5] The squatters[6] have a twofold origin. They are composed, firstly, of those Africans whose land was originally leased to Europeans (without their consent, of course),

[1] Hailey, p. 702.

[2] Answer to question by Archdeacon Beecher, K.L.C., January 1st, 1945.

[3] Noon, *op. cit.*

[4] Employers, nevertheless, complained that their extra labour requirements were in the region of 45,000, of which unskilled represented 42,962.

[5] Orde Browne, p. 82.

[6] Known also as resident labourers.

TABLE 12

*Distribution of Wage-earners in Occupations in Selected Years*

| | *No. of registered workers* | | | *Per cent. of registered workers* | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | *1937* | *1944* | *1945* | *1937* | *1944* | *1945* |
| Agriculture | 106,325 | 100,585 | 101,812 | 58·1 | 41·0 | 40·0 |
| Domestic and personal | 17,364 | 31,232 | 30,466 | 9·4 | 12·7 | 12·0 |
| Commercial and professional | | 17,138 | 16,846 | | 7·0 | 6·6 |
| Industrial | | 12,144 | 13,325 | | 4·95 | 5·2 |
| Mining | 6,354 | 3,306 | 7,620 | 3·4 | 1·3 | 3·0 |
| Building and Quarries | | 5,590 | 3,301 | | 2·3 | 1·3 |
| Timber Production | 24,645 | 12,643 | 8,356 | 13·4 | 5·15 | 3·3 |
| Miscellaneous | | 4,818 | 8,193 | | 2·0 | 3·2 |
| Public services and Government employ | 28,160 | 57,940 | 64,838 | 15·7 | 23·6 | 25·4 |
| Total | 182,854 | 245,396 | 254,757 | 100·0 | 100·0 | 100·0 |

but who remained where they were because they had nowhere else to go. And, secondly, of land-hungry Africans from the reserves who have been induced to settle by farmers who required labour and had more land than they could use. In 1945, the total squatter population numbered 202,944 (of which children formed 52 per cent.); the male resident labourers numbering 42,813. Not only the males, but the wives and children, must work for the landlord at rates less than that paid to labour from the reserves.

*Juveniles.* Unregistered male juveniles totalled 43,915 in 1944. Of these 36,201, or 82 per cent., were employed in agriculture on monthly terms. There are no accurate records of the large number of children who do occasional work. The law allows children of all ages to be employed on agricultural undertakings, the proviso being that children under ten must be accompanied by a relative. In 1938 the largest employers of juveniles were the Kericho and Limuru tea estates (approximately 5,600 a month), and the Nyanza Gold Mines

(approximately 1,500). Other large employers are sisal, coffee, and pyrethrum growers.

*Casuals.* Women form the bulk of the casual labourers. In 1944 they numbered 9,377. Men numbered 1,738. And children 2,876.

*Conscripts.* In 1942 compulsory labour was introduced for certain essential foodstuffs and other agricultural products. Until 1943 power to conscript was in the hands of a Kenya Essential Undertakings Board (composed largely of settlers) which considered coffee and tea essential to the war effort! The consequent outcry made the Secretary of State for the Colonies reserve to himself the power to declare essential undertakings, with the result that coffee and tea were excluded. At the end of 1944 there were 20,469 conscripts, of whom 10,265 were employed on sisal plantations, 4,394 on essential food and pyrethrum, and 1,060 on sugar. The aim of this conscription was clear. It was to prevent the labour shortage forcing a general rise in wages. When conscription began, volunteers to the Military Labour Corps were being offered 12 sh. a month on recruitment and 14 sh. soon after. The wage for conscript labour was fixed, however, at 8 sh. to 10 sh. a month, 9 sh. to 12 sh. for long periods of service. Since Africans naturally preferred to volunteer for the Military Labour Corps recruitment to it was stopped. The policy of conscription undoubtedly shared some responsibility for the serious food-shortage within the reserves in 1943. Several months after the war ended it was announced (November 27th, 1945) that no further compulsory labour was to be recruited after December 31st, 1945. This did not mean that no conscripts would be at work after that date. The Government announcement went on to say that labour on contract might be retained until September 30th, 1946, for sisal and essential foodstuffs and until March 31st, 1946, for rubber, flax, etc.[1]

In 1945, agriculture employed just under two-fifths of the total number registered in wage-earning employment (i.e. excluding casuals, juvenile labour, etc.). Of these, unskilled workers represented over 93 per cent.[2]

The majority of them work for private employers—settlers and companies owning estates. In 1944 European employers accounted for 136,373 registered workers, non-Europeans for 41,843. In the

[1] Notice No. 1007, *Kenya Gazette*, November 27th, 1945.

[2] Lack of demand for skilled workers is shown by the extra labour requirements of employers as reported in the 1945 Labour Census. These were 707 skilled and 33,133 unskilled.

same year only 7,086 were working in Government employment. Juveniles and casuals are almost entirely absorbed by private employers.

### *Public Services*

Out of every four Africans registered in wage-earning employment, one works in public services, i.e. Government, Railways and Harbours, Municipal and District Councils and H.M. Forces. The total number in public services (1945) was 72,778, of whom labourers formed 40,014, clerical and office staff 4,626, artisans, mechanics and other skilled workers 21,269.

### *Domestic Service*

The Soviet economist Varga has observed that one feature of imperialism in decay is the tendency for workers to "pass over from the sphere of production into the sphere of circulation and into the personal service of the ruling class."[1] This is strikingly confirmed in Kenya. In 1945, 30,466 Africans were registered in domestic service (or 11·96 per cent. of Africans employed outside the reserves). Over 20,000 of these were in European service—including public services. As there are 22,000 Europeans in the colony there is thus an average of one servant for almost every European man, woman and child. This cannot be regarded as other than a wastage of labour completely unjustifiable in a colony which introduced conscription.[2]

### *Industry, etc.*

Recent years have seen the growth of a small proletariat. The African population of Nairobi rose from 26,724 in 1939 to 40,674 in 1945. The majority of these are domestic servants, but a number are factory workers. The number of factory workers in Kenya in 1944 totalled 10,029.[3] There are a few thousand dock labourers in Mombasa—most of them casuals. Mining was employing an increasing number of workers before the war—the majority unskilled. In 1935 the number employed reached 14,115.[4] In 1945 building and

[1] Varga, *Two Systems*, 1939.

[2] An interesting sidelight is provided by the Government Notice No. 328 of 1944 fixing the maximum number of male servants in Nairobi as three for a household of one adult and four for a household of two adults.

[3] 1945 Labour Census.

[4] *Native Affairs Report*, 1935.

construction groups gave employment to only 3,301 Africans, or less than 2 per cent. of the total registered employees.[1]

The Africans, it will be clear, were meant to be and have become the hewers of wood and drawers of water. The tiny numbers of teachers, clerks, Government employees, medical assistants, etc., are swallowed up in the rest. One in ten is a domestic servant, while 70 per cent. of all African wage-earners are graded as unskilled. The manpower distribution thus reflects the backward, agrarian and colonial status of Kenya.

There is, moreover, a high degree of concentration of labour employment, as the following table[2] shows:

TABLE 13

*Concentration of Employment of Registered Africans in 1943*

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 6,293 | employers | employ | 1 registered African |
| 5,918 | " | " | 2–5 |
| 1,514 | " | " | 6–12 |
| 1,079 | " | " | 13–25 |
| 836 | " | " | 26–50 |
| 480 | " | " | 51–100 |
| 215 | " | " | 101–200 |
| 110 | " | " | 201–500 |
| 39 | " | " | 501–1,000 |
| 9 | " | " | 1,000–2,000 |
| 9 | " | " | 2,000 or more |
| 16,492 | | | |

These figures indicate that 382 employers (or 2·3 per cent.), out of a total of 16,492 who employ labour, employ approximately half the total number of registered employees.

## WAGES AND THE COST OF LIVING

Wages were not introduced in Kenya with the object of creating an internal market nor yet to provide the labourers with the essentials of life. In every country the historical element in the determination of wage rates (level of civilisation, organisation of labour, etc.) plays an important part. Since in Kenya the wage-earner of to-day was the subsistence peasant of yesterday, wages fluctuated around

[1] 1946 Labour Census.

[2] Source: 1944 Labour Census.

subsistence level. He was assumed to require only food (of the crudest type), shelter (equally crude) and enough cash to pay his taxes. Wages, however, tended to be even below subsistence level. This is because the wage-earner is assumed to be subsidised by his family, who scrape their subsistence from the soil in the reserve. That is why wages, even to-day, bear no relation to family needs or circumstances.[1]

### *Level of Wage Rates*

It is the practice in Kenya to pay wages partly in cash and partly in kind (food, etc.). The following rates were *inclusive* of rations, the cash wages paid being slightly over half the total.

TABLE 14

*Wage Rates 1940 and 1944 (in shillings)*

| | 1940 | | 1944 | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | *Skilled and semi-skilled* | *Unskilled* | *Skilled and semi-skilled* | *Unskilled* |
| Railway | 20–250; av. 24 | 15 | 45 | 30 |
| Defence | — | — | | |
| Other Government departments | 20–400; av. 23 | — | 45 | 20–25 |
| Municipalities | 20 | — | 45 | 20–25 |
| Agriculture | 12–200; av. 15 | 9 | 30 | 18 |
| Cooks[2] | 29 | | 50 | |
| House-boys | Av. 26–50 | | 40 | |
| General house-servants | Av. 16 | | 35 | |
| Mines | 14–50 | | 40 | 20 |
| Timber, buildings, lighterage, etc. | 25 | 20–65 | 30 | 10 |

Sources: *Blue Books 1940 and 1944.*

The significance of these figures is soon understood when compared with various cost of living estimates for Africans.

[1] This is now slowly changing for the higher categories of public employees.

[2] Rise in wages of domestic servants during war due mainly to the influx of the armed forces and consequent competition for trained servants.

*Cost of Living*

The following cost of living estimate is for Mombasa.

TABLE 15

*Minimal Monthly Diet and Additional Requirements, Single Man, 1939*[1]

| *Food* | *Weekly quantities* | *Mombasa price* | | *Monthly* | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | *oz.* | *sh.* | *cts.* | *sh.* | *cts.* |
| Beef | 56 | 1 | 40 | | |
| Maize meal | 126 | | 63 | | |
| Potatoes | 56 | | 21 | | |
| Beans | 14 | | 15 | | |
| Ghee | 15·75 | | 90 | | |
| Sugar | 14 | | 14 | | |
| Vegetables | 28 | | 18 | | |
| Salt | 3·5 | | 01 | | |
| Tea | 3·5 | | 33 | | |
| Total per week | | 3 | 95 | | |
| Total per month | | | | 16 | 80 |
| Rent | | | | 5 | 00 |
| Water | | | | 1 | 00 |
| Paraffin | | | | 1 | 25 |
| Wood | | | | 3 | 00 |
| Soap | | | | | 50 |
| Utensils | | | | | 50 |
| Tax | | | | 1 | 00 |
| | | | | 29 | 05 |

The minimal charges for a single man are thus 29 sh. 05 cts., exclusive of clothes, amusements, luxuries, remittances home, etc.

These figures alone make it clear that the wages normally paid to the Africans in almost any occupation are below subsistence level, even for the single labourer. As for the married man, *it is quite out* of question for him to have his family beside him and maintain them adequately. This is not only because his employer may forbid it and make no provision for it, but because he cannot afford to do so. The women, children and other dependants must remain in the reserve.

[1] Cf. App. III of *Report of Commission of Inquiry appointed to examine the Labour Conditions in Mombasa*, 1939, pp. 58–9.

Here is an official estimate for a reasonable monthly budget for lower-grade African Government servants (exclusive of housing).[1]

TABLE 16

*Budget For Lower-grade African Government Servants*

| *Heads of expenditure* | *Married man with two children, totalling thirteen years, permanently resident with him in town* | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | *Government Biochemist's ration for whole family* | *Railway diet plus 8 lb. meat at 1/30 for man only* | *P.W.D. diet plus 8 lb. meat at 1/30 for man only* |
| | *sh. cts.* | *sh. cts.* | *sh. cts.* |
| Food . . . . | 35 75 | 25 31 | 28 18 |
| Tax . . . . | 1 35 | 1 35 | 1 35 |
| Fuel . . . . | 4 25 | 4 25 | 4 25 |
| Light . . . . | 1 75 | 1 75 | 1 75 |
| Soap . . . . | 2 75 | 2 75 | 2 75 |
| Clothes . . . | 5 50 | 5 50 | 5 50 |
| Education . . | 0 75 | 0 75 | 0 75 |
| Miscellaneous . | 4 50 | 4 50 | 4 50 |
| Total . . . . | 56 60 | 46 16 | 49 03 |

This budget may well act as an estimate for the cost of living in the countryside, and, in view of the increase in the cost of living during the war, is certainly an underestimate.

We have mentioned that it is the custom of Kenya to pay wages in food as well as cash. For the most part this "food" has been 2 lb. of maize—meal and possibly salt, etc. In wartime, when the scale of rations was fixed, some employers served less than the prescribed amounts, and thus saved a good deal of money. Often the labourer attempts to supplement his food by outside purchases, and during the war he has had to do this at black-market prices. The great majority of course cannot afford to buy the extra food they require.

The European farmer in Kenya lives in constant fear that wages will rise. During the war, the acute labour shortage aggravated this

[1] *Report of Committee into Economic Capacity of Officers of Government and of the Kenya and Uganda Railways and Harbours in the Lower Grades*, p. 22. It is assumed that an adult woman has 0·83 per cent. of the needs of an adult man!

fear. The conscription measures introduced have been described. "We point out," wrote an official committee on conscription, "that without the legislation we now propose, competition among employers who need labour would be likely to cause wages to rise far above the rates we believe will result from our proposals."[1]

Not only is the wage of the African pegged at a low level during a time when his bargaining power would normally be high, but in periods of depression severe wage-cuts shift the burden of the crisis on to him. This was the case in 1921–2 and in 1930, when almost every category of worker received drastic wage-reductions. Some examples are:[2]

| | *November, 1930* sh. | *October, 1936* sh. |
|---|---|---|
| Coconut plantation labour | 21/50 | 8 |
| Fruit pickers and packers | 16/50 | 12/50 |
| Labourers | 14 | 11 |
| Herds and cattle men | 13 | 10/50 |

Skilled workers in particular suffered:

| | *November, 1930* sh. | *October, 1936* sh. |
|---|---|---|
| Fitters and mechanics | 47/50 | 25 |
| Motor drivers | 51/50 | 29 |
| Leather workers | 70 | 23 |
| Carpenters | 35 | 27 |

In every sphere of employment the principle of what one might call "payment by pigment" is firmly established, and woe to the farmer who breaks it. Outrageous examples are provided by the Railway Administration and in mining. In lode-mining, for example (in 1938), the European worker received an average monthly wage of 612.90 sh., or more than fifty times the wage of the African—which was 11.65 sh.

Bare figures leave much to the imagination. The life of the African labourer (especially in agriculture) is intolerably wretched in every way. "The housing on most farms consists of thatched mud and wattle huts, deficient in light and air, often in bad repair, damp and rat-ridden."[3]

[1] *Report of Committee on Question of Conscription of African Labour*, 1942, p. 8.

[2] *Annual Reports on Economic and Political Development of Kenya Colony.*

[3] Colin Maher, Officer in Charge, Soil Conservation Service, Kenya, in *East African Agricultural Journal*, April, 1942.

The water supplies for domestic use of agricultural labourers is rarely satisfactory. "Shower baths are rarely provided for the labourers, and such ablutions as are performed are usually at the nearest stream, also the source of drinking water . . . there is rarely any attempt to provide amusements of any description for the labourers. . . . Many farms are twenty or thirty miles from the nearest town. Should the farm labourer wish to buy clothes, blankets, soap, cigarettes, and other requirements, he may have to spend a day or two away, losing this time from his ticket. Often, however, there is an Indian *duka*, or store, on the farm or within a few miles of it. In other cases the owner of the farm runs a store for his labourers, often making a profit out of it; or very often an enterprising headman adds considerably to his income by keeping a small store to supply the simple needs of the labourers on the farm."[1]

Health and educational facilities are similarly lacking.

This wages policy has had appalling consequences.

(1) The African is fed below the physical minimum. Full efficiency is impossible. Parasitic diseases are rife. The pigs are better fed than the labourers. ". . . There seems something wrong in the sight of fat, complacent pigs on a farm when the labourers' children are thin, grey of skin and unthriving in appearance."[2]

(2) Family life is impossible except for squatters. Prostitution is common on farms and in the towns.[3]

(3) The low, undifferentiated wage-rates and "colour bar" discourage skill and initiative.

(4) The effect inside reserves is no less severe. Young women whose chances of marriage are remote because of the absence and poverty of the young men tend to drift out and become "camp-followers." And the dependants of the labourer are forced to remain within the reserves, mining the soil.

(5) Incomes are so limited that no real expansion of the internal market becomes possible. In 1945 over a quarter of a million African employees received a total monthly wage of just over a quarter of a million pounds (£263,191).

## Civil Liberties and the Worker

The advance of a country towards democracy is closely reflected in its labour legislation. Colonial labour legislation (or the absence

[1] Colin Maher, Officer in Charge, Soil Conservation Service, Kenya, in *East African Agricultural Journal*, April, 1942.

[2] *Ibid.*

[3] In Nairobi there are seven men to each woman.

of it) reflects the servile state of the African, who is considered ready for labour, but not for citizenship. Thus it is that while the British people have won for themselves a most comprehensive system of social security, Kenya Africans have not yet so elementary a protection as a Workmen's Compensation Ordinance.

The keynote of Kenya labour legislation is compulsion—compulsion to go out to work for private employers and compulsion to stay at work. Two main points must be grasped at once. First, that power to conscript labour still exists in Kenya and is used; secondly, that infringement of the labour laws is rated as a crime and the heaviest penalties can be imposed for minor acts of disobedience. British wartime labour penalties were mild beside Kenya's peacetime practice.

To illustrate this labour legislation, the African is presented at home in the reserve, on the farm, and in the town.

*The African at home* in the reserve is subject to the compulsory Labour (Regulation) Ordinance, 1932. By this law he can be conscripted for sixty days to work on public projects. If he is a tax-defaulter, he can be compelled to give work in lieu of tax. He may also be required to give twenty-four days a year free labour for tribal works. During the war he could be compelled to work on the estates of private European employers at a low fixed wage. At all times he is a prey for recruiters of labour—some licensed, others operating illegally. The assumption behind this legislation is that the African at home in his reserve is necessarily "resting" or "lazing about."

*The Wage-worker*

Almost every male adult African must leave the reserve to work for wages to pay tax for at least part of each year. His activities are controlled by two main laws, the Native Registration Ordinance and the Employment of Servants Ordinance of 1937, with all its amendments.

No African can obtain work for more than twenty-four hours without having a *kipande*, or registration certificate. A male African who comes within the category of "native" must register himself, receive a *kipande*, and thereafter carry this certificate upon his person at all times. The impressions of the fingers and thumbs of both hands are taken and are forwarded to the Central Fingerprint Bureau, so that if the African deserts his employer or commits any criminal offence he can be easily tracked down and arrested. When the

African enters employment the employer must enter the date of engagement. A wage and ration column must also be filled in When he leaves, the employer must again endorse the date. If the employer gives leave during the period of employment, these dates must also be entered. If by some chance the employer has not endorsed the date of the African's leaving his employment, a magistrate may do so. Any magistrate making such an endorsement must inform the last employer and the Labour Commissioner.[1] If the African is caught away from work without his certificate being endorsed, he can be arrested. The purpose of the *kipande* is clear. It guarantees that employers retain their labour supply.

The *kipande* has certain significant features. All endorsements must be made in English. It involves the African in considerable expense.[2] The power to demand production of the *kipande* is open to abuse by the police, who sometimes exact bribes. Intimidation is easy when practised on the illiterate population.

For offences against the Native Registration Ordinance, the African becomes liable to a fine of £20 or three months' imprisonment. These offences include being found in any district without his *kipande*, refusing to produce his *kipande* when told to do so by a lawful authority, mutilating his *kipande*, obtaining a new certificate without reporting the loss of the old one, or holding two certificates at the same time.

The *kipande* is a degradation, and the Africans recognise it as such. The feeling of Africans was summed up by Mr. Mathu when he said: "The *kipande* system is hated by every African in this land."[3] The system does not operate in Tanganyika and Uganda. Kenya Africans see no reason why it should apply to them only. Even Africans who can write are subjected to the humiliating fingerprint procedure when withdrawing money from the Post Office. The measure of the African's hatred of the system can be seen from the same speech of Mr. Mathu, where he tells that when Africans heard of the Government's proposals to set up a Kenya War Memorial, several wrote to him saying they wanted, not a school or a hospital, but the abolition of the *kipande* system.

*The Employment of Servants Ordinance* regulates contracts, con-

[1] Defence (Amendment of Laws No. 138) Regulation, 1943.

[2] A new container costs 1 sh.; alteration or correction of name, 2 sh.; a new certificate, 4 sh. As the Africans rarely have a secure place to keep their documents, losses are frequent.

[3] K.L.C., January 11th, 1946.

ditions of service, obligation of employers to his workers, and sets forth the penalties for infringements of the Ordinance.

The usual contract entered into is the thirty-day contract. The employee must complete thirty days' work within thirty-six days. He must work on the days the employer appoints. Should he fail to work on any of the appointed days, he has committed a breach of contract, and may have to enter into another contract to complete the work he has left unfinished. No written agreement is required for a thirty-day contract—merely the employer's entry on the *kipande* and the issue of a "ticket." During the war a ninety-day contract on the same principle was legalised.[1] This ordains that ninety days' work shall be completed in 108 days.

Other "special contracts" are sometimes entered into for a period of a year. They are written contracts, set down in English[2] and providing no loopholes.[3] Any leave granted is expressly excluded from the contract period.[4] The employer has in law certain obligations to his employees. If he employs a recruiter, he is responsible for providing for medical examination of recruits. He must at all times provide either proper housing accommodation or the rental thereof. He must also supply food and water or its cost, and medicine during illness. The labour inspectorate, however, has always been far too small to see that these obligations are carried out. And reports, both of officials (as at Mombasa in 1939) and unofficial observers, emphasise that these obligations are dishonoured.

The African is subject to heavy penalties for breaches of this Ordinance. He is liable to a fine amounting to half his month's

[1] The Defence (Amendment of Laws No. 154) Regulations, 1944. Government Notice 510 of 1944.

[2] "I feel it highly desirable that the schedule should make provision for a Swahili or vernacular edition of the contract to be prepared. There have been a number of instances in the past where Africans have blindly affixed their thumb-mark or signature to an agreement the exact nature of which has not been made apparent to them." Archdeacon Beecher, F.L.C., April 19th, 1944.

[3] The Kenya employers regard all Kenya Africans as their special property. Anyone attempting to induce labour to work outside the colony under any kind of informal contract is liable to a fine of £100 or a year's imprisonment.

Any person who knowingly employs an African who has deserted his employer is liable to a fine of £150 or six months' imprisonment.

Any person who knowingly harbours an African who has deserted his employer is liable to a fine of £10 (more than most Africans can earn in a year) or one month's imprisonment.

[4] Government Notice 142, February 12th, 1946.

wages or a month's imprisonment if he does not start work at the stipulated time after having entered a contract; if he is absent without leave; if he is drunk during working hours; if he is guilty of neglect in work; if he is insolent to his employer or to any person placed by his employer in authority over him; if he refuses to obey a command of his employer, "which command it was his duty to obey"; if he gives a false name and address for the purpose of *obtaining a contract.*

He is liable to a fine of £5 or six months' imprisonment if he does not do all in his power to protect property placed in his charge for delivery, etc., by his employer; if he commits wilful acts tending to immediate loss, damage or serious risk to his employer's property; if as a herdsman he fails to report the death or loss of any animal in his charge; fails to prove in court the death of any animal he alleges to have died, loses an animal and the employer proves in court that it is the servant's fault; if he loses property and the employer proves in court that it is by servant's default; if he deserts; if he uses a horse, vehicle, etc., belonging to his employer without permission.

Power to decide disputes between servant and master is in the hands of magistrates (European). It goes without saying that the employer is in a better position to argue his case than the African. On the application of an employer and at the magistrate's discretion, the term of imprisonment for desertion may be added to the original term of service. The period of absence may also be added to the original term of service. Loss to the employer's property through the servant's act or omission may at the magistrate's decision be paid for by instalments out of wages, amounting to half the wages earned.

Penalties are also attached to offences by employers. But in the Mombasa case there is no evidence that any of the employers who failed to provide housing were punished. Their plea of ignorance of the law was accepted. Yet each year hundreds of Africans who are ignorant of the provisions of the law (there are no vernacular versions of Ordinances) are fined or imprisoned.

*The Squatter* Laws of Kenya p. 1395.

The terms of service of the squatter are regulated by the Resident Labourers Ordinance, 1937.

The squatter lives on the farm of an occupier with his family. He cultivates a very limited area of land but may be forbidden to keep stock. He is a wage-labourer and not by any means a tenant.

No African may reside on any farm without the occupier's consent or without having entered into a contract to work.

A contract is entered into for a period of not less than one year or more than five years. The contract ordains the kind of crops which may be grown by the African or his family, the number of stock he may graze, and what land he may use for cultivation or grazing. No squatter may dispose of or sell any crops, etc., without first notifying the occupier.

Provision is made for the eviction of the squatter under a variety of circumstances. He may be evicted if he has no title under law to be on the land, if a magistrate thinks that his eviction with stock and family will prevent a breach of the peace, and if the squatter is residing on undeveloped land where the occupier is not exacting labour from him. The squatter must remove himself with all his belongings within fourteen to twenty-eight days of the order being given by a magistrate. He must move to such a place as the magistrate prescribes.

Power to lay down rules with regard to squatters is in the hands of the European District Councils. At one time the Conservator of Forests was able to give permission to squatters to reside on forest land. Now[1] District Councils have powers to make orders for forest areas which were outside their control under the 1937 Ordinance. The District Councils may limit the number of squatters who may be employed, prescribe all conditions under which squatters may keep stock, and prescribe the minimum number of days on which the squatter must work and receive wages for. In the original Ordinance the minimum was 180 days. By Defence Regulations passed during the war, this minimum was raised to 240 days, with a legal maximum of 270. The Aberdare District Council, in their promulgated order, laid down the *minimum* for their district as 270 days.[2] The same order lays down these regulations with regard to stock:

"7. After the 30th day of April, 1945, no resident labourer, native or Somali, shall keep on any farm within the jurisdiction of the Council any cattle, pigs or goats, or more than 15 sheep and two donkeys."

With regard to land: "8. No occupier shall allow any resident labourer to cultivate for the benefit of such resident labourer or his family, an area of land on the farm exceeding one acre for every adult working member of his family who is working for the

[1] Government Notice No. 579, July 3rd, 1945. [2] *Ibid.*, No. 316 of 1945.

occupier. Provided that notwithstanding anything in this section contained in no case shall an occupier allow any resident labourer to cultivate, for the benefit of such resident labourer or his family, an area exceeding three acres."

The squatter is liable to a fine of 100 sh. or one month's imprisonment for most of the crimes punishable by one month's imprisonment under the Employment of Servants Ordinance. He may also be punished for growing on the farm any crop forbidden by his contract or for failing to remove himself, family and stock if told to do so on the finish of his contract.

He is liable to a fine of 150 sh. or two months' imprisonment for wilfully damaging or risking his employer's property, neglecting to take all precautions to protect his employer's property, for the herdsman's offences we have listed under the Employment of Servants Ordinance. The discretionary powers of the magistrate are much the same as under the Employment of Servants Ordinance.

There is a growing trend to eliminate the squatter and convert him purely into a wage-labourer. This is the meaning of the powers given to the District Councils and the way they are using them. There are two main reasons for the trend. First, the Europeans do not wish the squatters to be regarded as having any title to land in the Highlands, and wish to make this clear before it is too late. Second, the growth of mixed farming makes the European farmer anxious to rid his farm of squatter cattle and use the grazing for his own.[1]

### *The Domestic Servant*

Domestic servants must conform to the Registration of Domestic Servants Ordinance, 1928. The Ordinance is not in operation throughout the whole of the Colony, but only in certain areas. Its object is to ensure that domestic servants are of good character before letting them loose in the homes of respectable Europeans.

The registration principle is much the same as under the Native

[1] "Squatters on European farms in the Highlands of Kenya refusing to accept a regulation restricting them to possession of only fifteen sheep and a maximum of 2 acres of land, one for each wife, recently told the Labour Commissioner at a gathering attended by thousands that they would return to their reserves rather than re-attest. The Commissioner [Mr. Hyde-Clarke, Labour Commissioner] . . . said that if they would use cash instead of stock in such transactions [as bride-price—S. A.] they would find that a maximum of two acres would be ample to support a family." *E.A. and Rh.*, December 26th, 1946.

Registration Ordinance. No African can become employed as a domestic servant in one of the registration areas without being first registered and vetted. The fingerprints of the intending servant are taken, or in certain cases photographs, provided at the African's expense, may be affixed instead. If nothing is held against him, the African is given a pocket register or "Red Book," which must be given up to the employer when he enters his service. If something is found against the servant, his registration may be cancelled.

The pocket register may involve the African in considerable expense. He pays 2 sh. for initial registration, 2 sh. for any alteration, 2 sh. for replacement when worn out, and 5 sh. for replacement if lost, mutilated, etc.

The most infamous feature of the pocket register is the employer's power to defame the servant's character. When entering the date of cessation of employment, the employer may also enter particulars of the character of the servant. If the employer is found to have made an accusation which he cannot substantiate, the maximum penalty that can be imposed on him is a £5 fine. In addition to remarks by employers, all terms of imprisonment without option of a fine served by the African must be recorded.

Any servant who contravenes any of the provisions of the Ordinance is liable to a fine of 50 sh. or three months' imprisonment, or both.

For particular offences, the servant is liable to a fine of 200 sh. or a year's imprisonment, or both.

A committee was appointed in 1939 to inquire into the registration system. Its report[1] reveals some interesting points.

*On one page of this report (p. 3) we are informed that the Secretary* of State was told that no racial discrimination was implied by the Ordinance, as it applied to servants *of all races whose earnings did not exceed* 200 *sh. a month!* Three pages later it is admitted that 98 per cent. of those registered are Africans.

Many of those who gave evidence demanded that the Ordinance should be applied throughout the Colony, on the grounds that servants of bad character flooded the non-registration areas. No one suggested that the introduction of more labour-saving devices and a bit of honest housework on the part of the European women might solve the problem.

The list of those who gave evidence to the Commission speaks for

[1] *Report and Recommendations of the Registration of Domestic Servants Ordinance Committee, 1939,* Nairobi, 1940.

itself. It consisted of eight Government officials, ten European associations, seven branches of the East African Women's League, thirty-seven European employers, and *four* unspecified Africans.

The registration scheme is still in force, with all its objectionable features.

### *The Town-dweller*

Although the African is "encouraged" to leave the reserve, he is nevertheless strongly discouraged from entering a town. If he does so, he is hedged in with innumerable restrictions. Two by-laws of Nairobi Municipality are worth mentioning.

By-law 212 states that no African shall remain in the Muncipality for more than thirty-six hours, excluding Sundays and public holidays, without employment, unless he is in possession of a resident's or visitor's permit issued by the Town Clerk. By-law 208 provides that no African is to be elsewhere in the Municipality than in the "native location" or on premises where he resides between 10 p.m. and 5 a.m. unless in possession of a pass signed by the Town Clerk or other authorised person. The ostensible object of the by-law is the prevention of crime. The obvious and insulting assumption is that Africans constitute a criminal strata of society.

Early in 1946, at the instigation of Mr. Mathu, an inquiry commission was set up to investigate the operation of these two by-laws. The Committee consisted of four Europeans and one Indian. The Chairman went on leave and was unable to remain with the Committee to complete the report. The Indian member and one of the Europeans did not attend any of the five Committee meetings.[1] The by-laws were *not* revoked.

The Africans who gave evidence contended that By-law 208 was a hardship for Africans wishing to visit relatives, that it constituted racial discrimination, since it applied to Africans only, and that crime should be controlled by an efficient police force and not by the much-resented pass system. European witnesses, on the other hand, suggested that the by-laws might be replaced by work colonies and houses of detention!

The most shocking piece of discriminatory legislation was rushed through the Legislative Council in February, 1946.[2]

[1] *E.A.S.*, February 26th, 1946.

[2] "An Ordinance Temporarily to Provide for the Removal of Undesirable Natives from Certain Areas," February 22nd, 1946.

Its main inspiration would appear to be fear of the returning Askari.

The authority with power to order the removal of an African is not a properly constituted tribunal, but "any person" whom the Governor may see fit to appoint.

Africans liable to be removed are those who have been sentenced to a term of imprisonment for an offence against the Native Liquor Ordinance "or in relation to property," those who can prove no regular employment, and those who have no settled home within the prescribed area.

If the authority thinks that an African is guilty on one of these counts, he may make out a Removal Order requiring the African to leave the area, to proceed to whatever place the authority designates, and to remain outside the prescribed area until further notice. No provision is made for the maintenance of the removed person at his place of arrival. The African has the right of appeal, not to a tribunal, but again to an individual, the Provincial Commissioner, whose decision is final.

The conditions of arrest and trial are startling even to one familiar with Kenya's penal legislation.

"*Any police officer may arrest without warrant* any native who he has reasonable cause to believe falls within any of the categories mentioned." (My italics.—S. A.)

Once arrested, the African may be detained twenty-four hours before being taken before the authority. He may then be detained for *one month* while inquiries are being made.

Any African not complying with the Removal Order is guilty of an offence against the Ordinance. "*Any police officer may arrest without warrant* any native who he has reason to believe is guilty of an offence against this Ordinance." (My italics.—S. A.)

"In any prosecution for an offence against this Ordinance *any document purporting* to be a Removal Order made in pursuance of the provisions of this Ordinance may be admitted in evidence *without proof of its authenticity*." (My italics.—S. A.)

Any African guilty of an offence against the Ordinance is liable to a fine of 200 sh., three months' imprisonment, or both.

The original Bill[1] provided for forty-eight hours' detention, before being brought before an authority, and for the extension of the powers of the Ordinance beyond the end of 1946 should the Legislative Council so decide. Largely due to the efforts of Mr. Mathu, the arrest period was reduced to twenty-four hours, and

[1] Published in Supplement to the *Official Gazette*, January 31st, 1946.

provision made that the Ordinance be definitely repealed at the end of 1946.

This particular Ordinance was certainly meant chiefly for use in towns, while the purpose of all these restrictive laws is (1) to divert the Africans into the farms and plantations, since too many of them make for the towns in the hope of earning higher wages, (2) to prevent the growth of a compact proletariat which could be easily organised to fight for higher wages and better conditions.

In this survey the reader will have noted the numerous documents the African must carry about with him, and the countless offences which constitute punishable acts.

One would think it of the greatest importance that a country where the inhabitants are always liable to arrest on slight pretexts should be served by an educated and discriminating police force. Not so. *The Report on the Committee on Police Terms of Service*, 1942, contains the following paragraph:

"The evidence submitted to us indicates, that, in general, the illiterate African makes a better policeman than a literate African. The latter is less amenable to discipline and is reluctant to undertake the menial tasks which sometimes fall to the lot of ordinary constables. That being so, it seems to us that the policy of recruiting literates should be pursued with great caution, and that no special inducements by way of salary are necessary. In fact, we venture to go so far as to recommend the abolition of literacy allowance for new entrants."

The Committee of Inquiry on the By-laws admitted that some annoyance was caused to Africans by the African police, "many of whom, as a result of their present low standard of education, are unable to read the *kipande*, which in most cases is the only form of identification. This often results in innocent Africans being taken to the Police Station."[1]

It should by no means be inferred from these remarks that abuse of police powers is confined to the African police. It is not. In a country where the legislation concerning the bulk of its people spells compulsion, restriction, and repression, every type of corruption and abuse must be present in the ranks of police of all races whose duty it is to enforce this legislation.

Probably the best way to understand how the African is legally hemmed in on every side is to take an example.

Let us suppose that a domestic servant, newly come to Nairobi,

[1] *E.A.S.*, February 26th, 1946.

is walking along a street after 10 p.m. at night. He is stopped by a policeman and asked to prove who he is and what he is doing outside the "native location." If he is lucky and the policeman is literate, he will take out one by one his *kipande*, his pocket register, his Resident's or Visitor's Pass, and the pass which allows him to be outside the "native location" between 10 p.m. and 5 a.m., and will be allowed to go on his way. If the policeman is not able to read properly, he may be hauled off to the police station and detained while inquiries are made. If, being a newcomer, he is not familiar with all the rules he is supposed to keep, he may either not have obtained the necessary passes or have left one or all of his documents at home. There may also be something wrong with his documents which he never had an opportunity of knowing if not literate in English. Or the shocking overcrowding in the "native location" may have made it essential for him to seek quarters outside it.[1]

In Kenya, civil liberties for the African may hardly be said to exist. Step by step, the European settlers, with the consent of the Administration, have copied the repressive legislation of South Africa, where racial discrimination reaches heights of pathological violence. The use of political power has thus hastened the transformation of primitive peoples into a large, unskilled, wage-earning class working under the most degrading conditions.

## Labour Struggles and Organisation

Too little is known in this country about the struggle of the African workers against their oppressive labour conditions. So quickly is each disturbance hushed up by officialdom that even the Africans themselves often have but a hazy idea of what has happened. Evidence of the labour struggle in Kenya is hard to come by. It is nevertheless clear that the Africans have frequently given the lie to their description as the "most docile labour force in the world."

In 1923 the demonstrated strength of the people thoroughly frightened the Government. Harry Thuku, a young Treasury official, started a huge protest movement against the *kipande*, forced labour, and other burning grievances. Tremendous crowds flocked

[1] Cf. The *Memorandum for the Native Affairs Committee of the Nairobi Municipal Council by the Senior Medical Officer of Health and Municipal Native Affairs Officer on Housing*, April, 1941, points out (p. 5) that the Municipality has not put up housing in the "native locations" in sufficient quantity to allow the town's African population to live there.

to hear him wherever he went. The campaign was only ended by the imprisonment without trial of Thuku, and the shooting of a defenceless crowd which had gathered outside the jail.[1]

Two general strikes in Mombasa (1939 and 1944) focused attention on the deplorable working and living conditions in the town—horrifying housing, starvation wages, excessively long working hours, and the blatant infringement by employers of their legal obligations.[2] The 1939 strike lasted about a fortnight. Beginning with the employees of the Municipality, it spread like wildfire, involving in turn the employees of the Electric Light and Power Company and the Posts and Telegraphs Department, and the dock labourers of the four port companies. The outstanding grievances were not settled. A series of strikes took place in 1942, and the workers struck again in 1944. The circumstances of the latter strike were not made public. The Commission of Inquiry issued a voluminous report but its contents were kept secret. It is known, however, that African chiefs were hurriedly imported to try to pacify the workers, and that the Labour Officer, the District Commissioner, and the Provincial Commissioner were all involved in suppressing the strike. One important victory was gained. The Minimum Wage Ordinance, formerly operated in Nairobi only, was brought into force for Mombasa also.[3] In 1944 two strikes took place among African drivers and firemen of the K. and U.R. and H. The larger one—in Nairobi—involved a demand for a 100 per cent. pay increase. A strike among cane-cutters and other smaller stoppages occurred in the same year.

Increasing awareness of the need to fight against oppressive labour measures has led the Africans not only to stage spontaneous strikes and demonstrations, but to organise. Almost every teacher is a member of the Kenya African Teachers' Union, whose threatened strike led to the new salary scales mentioned elsewhere in this book. Certain other groups, such as the tailors and carpenters, taxi and motor drivers, are also beginning to organise in unions. And the African Railway Staff Union, though closely controlled by the management, has made some valiant efforts to secure better conditions for the railway employees. A Trade Union Ordinance was rushed through in 1943 without discussion, as a result of discomforting questions in Britain about the absence of trade union legisla-

[1] For a fuller account, see McGregor Ross, *Kenya from Within.*

[2] Cf. *Mombasa Inquiry Report*, 1939.

[3] Another Mombasa general strike lasting 12 days has occurred January 1947.

tion in Kenya, but little effort has been made to inform the Africans of their new rights.[1]

The attitude of the Government towards the struggles of the African workers has been hostile. Not only has the formation of trade unions been vigorously discouraged,[2] but the weight of the Labour Department has been consistently thrown behind the employers. The following statement speaks for itself.

"I have no hesitation in saying if it had not been for a strong Labour Department, Kenya labour troubles in 1942 would have been much more serious and critical. The African labourer is awakening to the fact that he is holding a very strong hand."[3]

When as a result of labour disturbances the first Trades Disputes Tribunal was set up in Kenya,[4] it included one big employer of labour, but no African. When questioned on this point, the Government replied: "An employer of labour has been appointed a member of the Tribunal because Government is of the opinion that he is suitable, in every respect, to be a member."[5] In 1945 the commission of inquiry appointed to investigate the Mombasa disturbances again included a big employer of labour,[6] but no African.

In spite of all Government opposition, however, in spite of the embryonic form of their unions, there is no doubt that the Kenya Africans are through bitter intermittent struggle forming the tradition on which the all-Kenya workers' movement of the future will be based.

## Proposals

The basis of any plan for Kenya must be the marriage of the available manpower with the natural resources of the country. Such a plan becomes possible only if manpower is not subordinated to the interests of the British farmers or commercial interests, but is used in the interests of the development of Kenya and the majority

[1] Up to October, 1946, only two African trade unions were registered under the Ordinance: the Nairobi African Taxi-drivers' Union, and Thika Native Motor-drivers' Association.

[2] "I am not in favour of trade unions for natives; the time is not ripe for this." Mr. P. de V. Allen, Chief Labour Officer. Quoted in the Mombasa Inquiry Report.

[3] Mr. P. de V. Allen, Labour Commissioner, *Labour Department Report*, 1942, p. 7.

[4] The Defence (Trades Disputes) (Tribunal) Order, 1942.

[5] K.L.C., July 17th, 1945.

[6] Mr. Riddoch, a big business man in Nyanza Province.

of its people. The proposals here concern certain immediate outstanding problems.

Central among these problems (and high on the list of African grievances) is the disgracefully low rate of wages. No argument is too hackneyed or hoary to be used in defence of current wage-rates. The most important arguments are as follows:

(1) *An increase in wages would aggravate the labour shortage, since it would enable the African to raise money for his taxes, etc., in a shorter time. He would therefore return the sooner to his home in the reserve.*

The African, we have seen, is strongly discouraged from permanently settling with his family at his place of work. It would be strange, then, if he did not hasten to return to his home. Even if he should bring his family to stay with him, it could only be temporarily. He faces, otherwise, the prospect of losing his land-holding in the reserve.

And yet it remains true that those employers who have the hardihood to pay good wages are rarely short of labour.

(2) *The African worker is so inefficient that it is not possible to pay him more.*

The employer has been concerned, not with the efficiency, but the cheapness of his labour. Orde Browne comments:[1] "A tradition of wasteful use of manpower has established itself in E. Africa. . . . There is a tendency to deal with a lack of labour by an effort to find further supplies of untrained raw recruits from some distant area rather than by improving the performance of the labour force already available." Nor has the employer been interested in mechanisation. A Northern Ireland official, reporting on the "Flax Industry in Kenya,"[2] wrote: "A most important consideration is the cheap and plentiful supply of labour. . . . I am quite satisfied that both the harvesting and scutching of the flax crop in Kenya can be much more economically performed by manual labour than by means of the flax-pulling and automatic flax-scutching machines which have in recent years been introduced . . . in Western Europe."

The employer has provided no real incentives for efficiency. The wage of the skilled worker has been little different from that of the unskilled. In 1936 a teacher received 27 sh. a month—a personal servant was paid 26.50 sh. A lorry and tractor driver was paid 24.50 sh. compared with 20 sh. for a houseboy. Army experiences proved conclusively that, given real incentives (proficiency pay, etc.), the Askari showed remarkable skill and initiative.

[1] Orde Brown, p. 24.

[2] W. J. Megaw, 1939, p. 4.

It is said by Orde Browne and others that the productivity of the labourer has gone down by one-third since the 1930's. If this is true, the Africans have meted out poetic justice to their employers. Between 1930 and 1936 the wages of skilled and unskilled labourers were cut by more than one-third. In the case of skilled men, wages were almost halved.

It is hypocrisy in the employer, who keeps his labourers barely above starvation level, houses them in hovels, and provides the scantiest sanitation, to criticise them for not working hard enough.

(3) *Based on the peculiar conditions of shortage arising from the war it is argued: It's no use increasing wages—there are no goods available for the African to buy with the extra money.*

The assumption behind this argument is: "The African labourer is a sub-normal person or at best a child who will squander any extra money we give him. Let us therefore keep this money, so that in our wise hands it may be put to use by men who appreciate its real value."

In fact, there are many uses to which the Africans can put this money, such as financing co-operatives and other enterprises, building up funds for additional educational facilities and so on. Moreover, any accumulation would help to build a solid base for local industries and services, as well as expanding the potential market for imported goods.

All these arguments are merely part of a façade. There are three powerful reasons for immediate and drastic increases in wages:

The African must be paid a wage sufficient to maintain himself and his family at his place of work at a reasonable standard of life.

The building up of the internal market for the products of diversified local industries is dependent on such wage increases.

The most efficient use of available manpower would be directly encouraged.

### *A New Wages Policy*

Without a new wages policy, economic catastrophe will face Kenya. It must include:

(1) The operation of the Minimum Wage Ordinance to establish a minimum wage for all adult wage-earners. For immediate consideration, 50–60 sh. monthly is suggested with a higher minimum in the towns, because of the higher cost of living.

(2) Higher rates for skilled workers, providing maximum incentives.

(3) Construction of a cost-of-living index based on a new and generous view of African living standards.

(4) The rate for the job: no colour discrimination. The Government and local government bodies to aim at being model employers.

(5) Control of prices to peg the cost of living.

(6) Import priorities for goods essential for raising African living standards, together with the planning of increased local manufacturing.

### *Social Security*

An expanding system of social security, so far from being Utopian, is an absolute necessity for Kenya. So long as the Government makes no provision for the maintenance of the aged, the infirm and the other dependants of the wage-earner, pressure on the land will become increasingly intense. With the breakdown of tribal organisation, many of those unable to work who were formerly the responsibility of the tribe as a whole are now "nobody's business" and suffer hardship. The increase in the number of wage-earners makes it necessary to provide for sickness, disablement, etc., in the same way as in most other countries.

The introduction of such a system in an agrarian country like Kenya, where there is still a fair degree of subsistence farming and vital statistics are absent, is certainly no simple matter. But experiments in South America and even in certain British colonies (like Ceylon) show that a start is possible. The scheme might be simple at first, but should allow for expansion. The most vital things for it to cover are old age pensions, workmen's compensation, health services and (for urban workers to begin with) unemployment relief. The major contributions to the cost of such a scheme must come from employers and the Government. Certain taxes could be levied immediately to build up a social security reserve fund.

Investigations into the scope of such a scheme should begin at once with the provision that it should be introduced within a specified time—say, three years.

### *Labour Legislation*

The first essential is the unconditional abolition of the *kipande*. This must be accompanied by the repeal of all those Ordinances named in this chapter (and many not mentioned) which legalise or encourage racial discrimination of any kind. Penal sanctions should go immediately. They were abolished in British India in 1926, in

the Gold Coast in 1931, in Nigeria in 1933. In Java they went in 1877. What little legislation exists to protect the African worker must be operated, and the heaviest penalties imposed on employers who break the law. All legislation should be made readily available to the Africans, preferably in the vernacular.

New legislation is urgently needed along the following lines:

(1) The new and long-promised Workmen's Compensation Ordinance.

(2) A Factory Ordinance and a Shops Ordinance following the lines of the British Factory Act (1937) and Shops Act (1934).

(3) Up-to-date mining laws, with stringent safety regulations.

(4) An Ordinance to prohibit the regular employment of children below the age of fourteen in non-industrial as well as industrial undertakings, with special safeguards for young persons of eighteen and under employed in such undertakings.

(5) An Ordinance to regulate further the employment of women —adequate childbirth provision, and equal treatment with men as regards remuneration and other conditions of employment.

(6) An Ordinance to eliminate recruiting by the setting up of free agencies, controlled by the Government, providing medical inspection, transport, food and shelter.

(7) An Ordinance to define precisely the minimum standards of accommodation where the employer is required to provide housing, and to provide for heavy penalties where these standards are not observed.

### *Reorganising the Labour Department*

The role of the Labour Department has been anything but a progressive one. If it is to handle its heavy responsibilities adequately, it must change both in outlook and in composition.

Orde Browne, in his recommendations on the Kenya Labour Department,[1] suggests the appointment of a Medical Officer, a Factory Inspector, a Trade Union Officer, and a Statistical Officer. He envisages machinery which will deal with labour legislation, industrial relations, trade unionism, conciliation and arbitration, the establishment of labour exchanges, and the construction of a cost-of-living index.

The establishment of such machinery is certainly desirable. Its operation, however, must be in the interests of the Africans. Three measures are essential. An increase in the size of the inspectorate to

[1] Orde Brown, p. 87.

ensure that employers do not break the law, this increase to be effected by the employment of trained Africans. The establishment of industrial courts, providing for adequate African representation, in arbitration cases. And the speediest provision for the training of Africans for responsible positions in the Labour Department.

### *Building the Trade Union Movement*

Kenya urgently needs a trade union movement capable of organising its multitude of workers. Among teachers, clerical workers, Government servants, artisans, agricultural workers and dock labourers there is ample evidence of readiness for trade union organisation. The trade union movement in this country has a real responsibility in this direction.

Orde Browne in his report made quite clear what kind of organisers would be welcome in East Africa:

"The evolution of leaders from the people can be encouraged and an organisation gradually built up which will be *as welcome to the employer as it will be serviceable to the worker* [My italics.—S. A.] . . . though progress must of necessity be slow."[1]

Two trade union organisers from Britain have now been appointed to Kenya. If they see as their main job the formation of organisations "welcome to the employer," the trade union movement here will bear a large share of responsibility for the consequent bitterness of the Africans. In future all such appointments of trade union organisers should be made in close conjunction with the British T.U.C.[2] The posts should be widely advertised to secure the greatest range of applications from men of experience.

In Kenya, expansion of trade unionism will be dependent on:

(1) Freedom to "engage in such activities as the advocacy of

[1] Orde Brown, p. 30.

[2] See the important resolution at the 78th Annual T.U.C. at Brighton, 1946: "That this Congress, believing that the British Colonial and Mandated Territories require a free trade union movement with the same rights and privileges as British trade unions, so as to ensure that working conditions are safeguarded and higher standard of living secured, requests the General Council to give all possible assistance to trade unions in these territories.

"Congress further requests the General Council to collect and forward to the World Federation of Trade Unions information on the measure of trade-union organisation in the different British Colonial and Mandated Territories in order that the Federation might consider, in relation to similar information from other affiliated centres, the whole problem raised by the economically low standard peoples everywhere."

changes in laws affecting labour, workers' education, social services, etc.," without these being declared unlawful activities.[1]

(2) The freeing of the African Railway Staff Union from the control of the General Manager and its establishment as the organisation of all grades of railway workers.

(3) The training of Africans in the principles, history, and working of trade unionism—through special courses to be arranged in this country by the T.U.C.—so that Kenya will not for ever be dependent on advisers from Britain.

(4) The formation of a Kenya Trade Union Congress affiliated to the World Federation of Trade Unions.[2] Such a link-up would enable the Kenya Africans to establish fraternal relations with the trade unionists of other African territories and together with them to carry forward the fight for improved living standards for all the African peoples.

[1] Cf. *Labour in the Colonies*, Fabian Society, 1942, p. 9.

[2] A very important step was taken by the Executive Committee of the W.F.T.U. at its meeting in June, 1946, when it decided to set up a department to aid the trade union movement in the colonial and mandated countries, and to send a commission of its own to the colonial countries in the Pacific and in Africa.

# EDUCATION

EDUCATION in Kenya is infected with the same spirit of discrimination as every other aspect of life in the colony. There is a well-developed system of education for the European children, i.e. the children of the ruling class. For the great majority of African children, however, *no* educational facilities exist.

Three factors have shaped the educational policy of the colony. First, there has been the need to train a limited number of Africans as clerks and artisans for administrative tasks, public works and certain non-Governmental needs. The two other factors have in part conflicted with the first and remain the most important. They are the desire of the European farmers for a vast, ignorant reserve of cheap labour, and the almost hysterical fear that education would equip the Africans for independence.

## The Missions Arrive

Until 1911, when the first Director of Education was appointed, education was almost entirely in the hands of the missions. The first East African mission school was opened in 1846 by Krapf and Rebmann, two famous representatives of the Church Missionary Society. The United Methodists were not far behind. Into the breach came the Imperial British East African Company, establishing "law and order." Once the land was opened up, missions poured in without queue or plan. The Church of Scotland and the Roman Catholic Mill Hill Fathers, Seventh Day Adventists and the Holy Rollers—in all, some seventeen different missionary bodies pegged their claims and set about converting the heathen. In the course of their work, they established schools where Africans could learn their Catechism and read the Bible. A mission station usually had a central school where more advanced teaching was given and from which a number of "bush schools" run by inadequately trained African teachers was supervised.

The white farmers (coming from Britain or South Africa) wanted some better system of education for *their* children, who became the direct responsibility of the Kenya Government. For these children, education was put on a professional footing, with qualified teachers

and suitable school buildings. The aim, now achieved, was that all white children should be able to get education up to university standard within Kenya itself.

No such aim imbued African education. It is now largely where it was in the early part of the century: in the hands of the missionaries, whose chief aim is conversion, whose educational training is often defective, and whose activities at all times have been hampered through lack of funds. Thus *the missions remain entrenched* as the chief agents in African education, ensuring that the vast majority of Africans will never be educated, that those who are will learn little, and that the greatest pains will be taken to protect them against "dangerous ideas."

In order to secure the artisans they required, the Government made an early attempt to make grants to mission schools dependent on their giving training in the use of tools, but later opened a school of its own (at Machakos) for this purpose. Subsequently, mainly under pressure from Africans, the Government also opened a number of primary schools of its own.

### The System of Control

The "boss" of Kenya's education system is the Director of Education. His decisions on curriculum, the opening and closing of schools and the allocation of funds are final. However, as the settlers have always insisted that no official can dispense with their advice, they were appointed in strength to the Advisory Committee on Native Education set up in 1923. This body contained missionaries and officials, but no African. When in 1931 a new body—the Advisory Council on African Education[1]—was created settlers were again appointed, though no African was made a member until 1936. Within the Legislative Council also great pressure is often exerted by the unofficials on the Director of Education, aimed at restricting educational facilities for Africans to the minimum.

More important, from the African point of view, are the District Education Boards. The Government had already given Local Native Councils limited representation on the forerunners of the Board—the School Area Committees. The object had been to encourage Local Native Councils to give more financial help to both mission and Government schools. These Councils prior to 1934 had powers to allocate their funds to schools of their own choice,

[1] Advisory Councils on European, Indian, and Arab Education were set up at the same time.

and showed a perverse inclination to make grants to independent schools run by Africans. The Government (and the settlers) found the political implications of this intolerable, and the District Boards were set up in 1934 to make such "license" impossible. All education grants, whether from public funds or from Local Native Councils, must be allocated through the Board, thus ensuring that no Council subsidises any school of which the bureaucracy disapproves. Each Board is composed of six Africans nominated by the Local Native Council, four persons nominated by school managers, and an unspecified number of Government officials. Real power is in the hands of that hard-worked, ubiquitous official, the District Commissioner, who acts as chairman. African resentment is all the greater in that the Local Native Council (itself an undemocratic body) sometimes nominates the wrong kind of representatives. The following excerpt from a letter in *Mwalimu* (an African paper) reflects the feeling of many educated Africans:

> "SIR,—The progress of our country depends on educated leaders. . . . The District Education Boards which are the bodies responsible to a large measure, for African schools in Kenya seem to be contented with the present educational progress. That is the result of having illiterate representatives on these bodies. Most of the members attend the meetings for the purposes of hearing what their D.C. will tell them, instead of they themselves discussing these affairs independently in order to find out what is wrong and state it."[1]

The "independent" school movement which began among the Kikuyu is of significance. In 1930 the Church of Scotland Mission in Kikuyu attempted to impose educational sanctions on all Africans who subscribed to the tribal practices of female circumcision. The Kikuyu forthwith demanded secular schools run either by Africans or the Government. Three Local Native Councils voted £20,000 for the establishment of such schools, and the Africans offered to provide for their full maintenance as well as the capital cost. The reply of the Government was to put all its weight behind the missions.[2]

In retaliation, the Kikuyu set about establishing schools independent of both Government and missions. The wrath of authority was

[1] February 20th, 1946.

[2] "The missions," states the 1931 *Native Affairs Report*, "recovered much of their lost ground. They were much helped by Government pursuing a policy of developing education through them."

great. Local Native Councils were prevented by the District Boards from making direct grants to these schools. Inspectors were hurriedly sent round the schools and many were declared unsatisfactory. Some schools were closed down by order of the Director of Education.

Restricted in funds and the target of much abuse, the independent schools nevertheless made steady progress. By 1935 forty-three schools had been established. In 1936 the number of pupils was 6,000, rising to 7,223 in 1937. To-day there are more than a hundred of these schools, maintained by the community and averaging 200 pupils each. There are two larger "model" schools, of which Mr. Mathu's has some 500 pupils.

Everywhere else the opposition to mission schools was overcome. But because in almost every colony the imperialists have chosen the missions as their instrument against independent thinking by the subject peoples, the Kikuyu "independent" schools movement represented far more than a temporary revolt against the teaching of a particular mission. It was a landmark in African advance.

## What Kind of Education?

For Europeans, school education in Kenya is comprehensive, of good standards and expensive. It is compulsory for all children between the ages of seven and fifteen. Post-school training is provided by Government departments, the Egerton School of Agriculture and in overseas or South African universities by means of scholarships.

Indian education has now reached the stage of compulsory education for all Indian boys resident in the towns.

African education is another tale. Inadequately inspected mission schools, in many of which standards are too poor to qualify for a grant, form the basis of the African school system. To these must be added a handful of Government schools (built largely under pressure of African demands for secular education) and the independent schools described above. So poor is the provision that no more than 18 per cent. of all African children of school age receive any education whatsoever, while no more than 0·03 per cent. (in 1943) reach even a junior secondary standard.[1]

The distribution of pupils among the different types of schools can be seen from the following table:

[1] In 1943, only 134,185 African children out of an estimated school-age population of 718,000 were receiving any education. See K.L.C., May 1st, 1945.

TABLE 17

*The School System (1939)*

| *Schools* | *Sub-elementary* No. of schools | Total No. of pupils | No. of girls | *Elementary* No. of schools | Total No. of pupils | No. of girls | *Primary* No. of schools | Total No. of pupils | No. of girls | *Secondary* No. of schools | Total No. of pupils | No. of girls |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Government | | | | 41 | 3,507 | 201 | 13 | 1,982 | 26 | | | |
| Aided | 96 | 3,988 | 1,173 | 372 | 47,512 | 14,736 | 36 | 2,851 | 329 | 4 | 228 | 2 |
| Unaided | 1,347 | 48,195 | 19,088 | 187 | 23,090 | 7,344 | | | | | | |
| Total | 1,443 | 52,183 | 20,261 | 600 | 74,109 | 22,281 | 49 | 4,833 | 355 | 4 | 228 | 2 |

Figures from *Education Department Report*, 1939.

*Sub-Elementary Schools.* Bush schools scarcely ever visited by Europeans. Teachers with little education, no training, badly paid. Content of education—elements of Christian religion, little reading, writing, arithmetic in the vernacular, elementary hygiene. Some Catholic schools include pupils who have been instructed solely in the Catholic faith and are not literate.

*Elementary Schools.* Five-year course. Handwork, physical training. Nature study. Swahili and geography in third year. Simple English introduced in fifth and sixth year of selected schools. (In Mr. Mathu's school the mediums are Kikuyu and English only. No Swahili.)

*Primary Schools.* Chiefly boarding schools. Usually European principal. Medium of instruction, Swahili; Subjects—religious instruction, English, Swahili, maths., history, geography, nature study, hygiene, agriculture, arts and crafts, domestic science. Pupils' course must consist of minimum of four subjects, two from practical subjects, one language and maths.

*Secondary Schools.* First two years of junior secondary course.

The table shows that the vast majority of children get education of the most rudimentary kind. Attendance at the sub-elementary schools by no means guarantees even literacy. Even the elementary schools are often so taken up with cultivating small vegetable plots or doing simple handicrafts that the children who emerge from them at the end of a five-year course may be barely literate and equal to about the second year of a *junior* elementary school in Britain. Sub-elementary and elementary schools accounted for 96·1 per cent. of children receiving education in 1939 and 97·2 per cent. in 1945.

TABLE 18

*The School System 1939 and 1945*

| | *1939* | | *1945* | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | *No. of children* | *Per cent.* | *No. of children* | *Per cent.* |
| Sub-elementary . . | 52,183 | 39·7 | 161,178 | 73·7 |
| Elementary . . . | 74,109 | 56·4 | 51,318 | 23·5 |
| Primary . . . | 4,833 | 3·7 | 5,846 | 2·7 |
| Secondary . . . | 228 | 0·2 | 226 | 0·1 |
| Total . . . . | 131,353 | | 218,568 | |

While there has been an increase in the number of children receiving education, there has been an absolute deterioration in the quality of the education.

The proportion who get any form of higher education is infinitesimal. The secondary schools absorb only some two hundred pupils a year. Two of the four secondary schools[1] go no further than the second year of a British secondary course, while the other two go up to Cambridge School Certificate. Some of those who complete the secondary course go on to Makerere College in Uganda for a course in teaching, or veterinary science.[2] A persistent

[1] Two of them are Catholic and two Protestant.

[2] That no Kenya Africans are intended to become the holders of the East African Diploma of Medicine is shown by this answer to a question asked in the House of Commons, May 15th, 1946:

| *Colony* | *Holders of Dip. Med. of E. Africa* | *Students in training* |
|---|---|---|
| Tanganyika | 5 | 4 |
| Uganda | 52 | 57 |
| Kenya | 0 | 0 |

few may beg or borrow the money to take them to Fort Hare University in South Africa. Little Government provision is made for Africans who wish to study in Britain, although Europeans and Indians are given bursaries for this purpose.

A type of training cynically called "vocational" and sharply divided from ordinary education is given by some Government departments, the railway administration and the Native Industrial Training Depot. That given by Government departments has the worst features of our apprenticeship system, where lads are made into errand and tea-boys without learning the trade.

The Native Industrial Training Depot[1] was set up by the Government in 1924 with the idea of displacing Indian artisans. Its chief use, however, appears to have been the provision of a free labour force. The boys were employed mainly, not in getting a grip on their trade, but in work for outside concerns. In 1937, "the ornamental ironwork for the new boarding block of the Government Boys' School, Nairobi, was again entrusted to the Depot. . . . All mason apprentices not out in building gangs were employed in rebuilding the Veterinary Laboratory at Kabete. . . ." Between 1927 and 1937, the Depot erected buildings to the tune of £128,000 and carried out £25,000 work in the workshops. "The total saving to Government departments and mission schools appears to represent approximately half the annual cost of the running expenses of the Depot."[2]

Trained only to work in gangs under close supervision, it is not surprising that many of the boys failed to get jobs on finishing their training.

### Where Does It Lead?

What if you were one of the lucky Africans completing a primary school course? Before 1939, the opportunities for satisfying employment were drastically limited. For the "better-paid" job there was fierce competition. You might remain unemployed or perhaps become a teacher for want of anything better.

Once the demand for a small number of clerks and other subordinate clerical assistants is satisfied, the Government seeks to turn educated Africans back to the reserves. In 1937 the *Education Department Report* stated that "while every endeavour is being made by the Department to stress the importance of manual work . . . it is,

[1] Taken over by the military, 1940–5. [2] *Education Department Report*, 1937.

inevitable, or at least it seems so, that there should be a large number of pupils, especially those who have done reasonably well in the school examinations, who find it difficult or unattractive to go back to their homes to try to get a living from the soil, or by practising one of the handicrafts they have learnt. A fair proportion of those boys at present get placed in Government posts or take up teaching work, but it is to be regretted that the number of unemployed boys who can read and write and who have a fair knowledge of both English and Swahili is rapidly increasing. They consider they have a grievance against Government, especially when, after passing the Primary School Examination, they apply for a post and are told 'with regret' that there is no vacancy."[1]

In a crisis even the few who are trained in the *secondary* schools cannot find jobs.

The Principal of the Alliance High School stated in 1932: "Largely owing to the depression, it is becoming increasingly difficult to obtain employment for pupils who leave the school at the end of each year. . . . It would seem as if the value of Africans in posts of responsibility were not sufficiently realised by the commercial and other communities."[2] The lack of remunerative employment is especially glaring in the case of the Makerere trained students. After six years' study, they are lucky if they get jobs as veterinary assistants, Civil Servants, etc., at as much as £2 a week.

## Expenditure

For every shilling spent by the Government on an African child at school in 1945, 150 were spent on his European counterpart. Discrimination against the Africans has grown, not lessened, since the 1930's.

A far more startling contrast is provided by a comparison of expenditure per head on children of *school age*. The figure for European children remains at £75 6*sh*. per head (since there is compulsory education), but expenditure per head on African children is reduced to 3.07 sh., or 500 times less! Yet these figures underestimate the discrimination. Items of expenditure are to be found tucked away under other than education heads, drawn from funds made available by Colonial Loans and under the Colonial Development and Welfare Act. Between 1930 and 1938 expenditure on school buildings, furniture and apparatus from Colonial Revenue

[1] *Ibid.*, 1937. [2] *Ibid.*, 1932.

TABLE 19

*Government Expenditure on European and African Education*

| | *European Education* | | | *African Education* | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | *Government Expenditure* | *No. of pupils in all schools* | *Expenditure per head of children* | *Government expenditure* | *No. of pupils in all schools* | *Expenditure per head of schoolchildren* |
| | £ | | £ s. d. | £ | | £ s. d. |
| 1936[1] | 49,814 | 1,889 | 26 7 5 | 80,721 | 100,720 | 16 0 |
| 1945[2] | 151,215[3] | 2,000[4] | 75 6 0 | 110,268[3] | 218,568 | 10 1 |

and Colonial Loan Funds totalled £60,621 for Europeans and £22,817 for Africans.[5] In the period 1939–46 the difference increased rather than diminished, as the following table shows:

TABLE 20

*Expenditure on School Equipment and Stores, Repairs, Maintenance and Improvements from 1939–46 inclusive*

*(All Figures from Successive Financial Reports)*

| | *European* | | | *African* | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | £ | s. | cts. | £ | s. | cts. |
| 1939 . . . | 12,074 | 16 | 98 | 8,296 | 10 | 85 |
| 1940 . . . | 11,785 | 5 | 89 | 7,305 | 7 | 84 |
| 1941 . . . | 14,328 | 15 | 98 | 6,813 | 12 | 04 |
| 1942 . . . | 21,034 | 17 | 67 | 6,801 | 8 | 98 |
| 1943 . . . | 31,733 | 9 | 51 | 8,296 | 0 | 02 |
| 1944 . . . | 41,489 | 4 | 79 | 10,440 | 1 | 21 |
| *(The figures for the following two years are the official estimates.)* | | | | | | |
| 1945 . . . | 53,385 | 0 | 0 | 13,180 | 0 | 0 |
| 1946 . . . | 58,000 | 0 | 0 | 18,385 | 0 | 0 |
| Total . . . . | £243,832 | 10 | 82 | £72,518 | 0 | 94 |

[1] 1936 figures from Hailey, Table XI.

[2] Expenditure figures from 1945 Estimates under heading: Education Department.

[3] Estimated expenditure (official). [4] Approximate figure.

[5] Figures from successive *Education Department Reports*.

Why is European education so comparatively expensive? Mainly because the settlers (supported by the Government) are determined to get for their children the best education the colony can afford, and are no less determined that African children shall have as little education as possible.

It is sometimes argued that the heavy expenditure on European education is justified by the steady rise in revenue from fees. This claim is disproved by the 1940–6 figures:

TABLE 21

| *Year* | *European expenditure by Education Department*[1] | | | *Revenue from fees*[2] | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | £ | s. | cts. | £ | s. | cts. |
| 1940 . . | 50,533 | 10 | 77 | 17,537 | 7 | 46 |
| 1941 . . | 56,034 | 7 | 23 | 22,028 | 10 | 16 |
| 1942 . . | 67,058 | 11 | 45 | 26,940 | 8 | 15 |
| 1943 . . | 88,547 | 13 | 86 | 39,119 | 12 | 47 |
| 1944 . . | 117,443 | 12 | 32 | 49,737 | 2 | 9 |
| 1945 . . | 151,215 (estimate) | | | 52,000 (sanctioned estimate) | | |
| 1946 . . | 159,130 (estimate) | | | 62,000 (estimate) | | |

Most of what the Government spends on African education goes in grants-in-aid to the missions. In 1935 this accounted for £37,437 or 55 per cent. of the total spent on African education. By 1944 it accounted for £57,248, or 65 per cent. Passages home both of missionaries and Government teachers is another heavy charge on the already meagre allocation.

There is a widespread belief that African education is financed entirely by Government and missions. This is not so. The financial burden is being increasingly thrust on to the Africans themselves.

Fee-paying was introduced in 1925, when mission funds were low. Fees from Africans partly meet expenditure both in Government and mission schools. It should not be overlooked either that mission funds are largely maintained by African congregations and that the contribution from overseas has progressively shrunk.

Most important is the contribution made by the Local Native Councils through tax levies additional to Government taxation. Not only do they contribute the capital cost of building most Government and many mission schools and grant scholarships to

[1] Financial Statements: Head, Education Department and 1945/6 Estimates.

[2] Financial Statements and 1945/6 Estimates under head, Revenue.

pupils attending the secondary schools, but by 1943 they were made to bear *complete financial responsibility for elementary and day primary schools in their areas.* We give here the pre-war position, together with the estimated expenditure on education for 1945–6:

TABLE 22

*Local Native Council Expenditure on Education*

| *Year* | *Expenditure on education* | *Total expenditure* | *Percentage of total expenditure* |
|---|---|---|---|
| | £ | £ | |
| 1930 | 7,348 | 46,978 | 15·6 |
| 1931 | 17,000 | 61,497 | 27·6 |
| 1932 | 17,624 | 74,315 | 23·7 |
| 1933 | 10,447 | 53,140 | 19·7 |
| 1934 | 22,728 | 77,806 | 29·2 |
| 1935 | 12,635 | 73,302 | 17·2 |
| 1936 | 13,817 | 81,446 | 17·0 |
| 1937 | 15,999 | 98,087 | 16·3 |
| 1938 | 18,014 | 102,934 | 17·5 |
| 1945[1] | 41,322 | | |
| 1946[1] | 77,000 | | |

The enthusiasm of the African for education is unlimited. All our evidence shows his willingness to make great efforts to secure it. But owing to the financial burden increasingly passed on to the Local Native Councils the finances of the latter have become dangerously strained.

In 1937 it had been pointed out that in Nyanza "the present demands for education already exceed the money available and . . . there are scarcely any reserves in hand."[2] In 1946 the position has become impossible. ". . . Local Native Council finances this year have deteriorated still further. . . . They have been peremptorily ordered to undertake no further educational development in 1946."[3]

Unassisted by Government grants, the Local Native Councils have often been compelled to raise the rates of the already overtaxed African populace, whose poverty soon sets a limit to this process. The result has been to create the worst crisis so far in the struggle of the African for education.

[1] Acting Director of Education, K.L.C., November 28th, 1945.

[2] *Native Affairs Report*, 1937.

[3] Archdeacon Beecher, K.L.C., November 26th, 1945.

## Looking to the Future

The Africans need education as a weapon in their struggle for independence. They need it to overcome the poverty and backwardness of their country. Children and parents alike must share actively in a great mass education movement to create a literate population and put culture and new skills within the grasp of all.

Many useful proposals for carrying out a mass education programme have been outlined in a recent Colonial Office Report.[1] But it is now plain that the Kenya Government does not intend to plan, still less implement such a mass education programme. This opposition is an obstacle which must be cleared away by the firm leadership of the Labour Government at home. Even so, no plan can succeed if the Africans themselves are not allowed to exercise real power in carrying it through.

The following proposals concern chiefly the school system, but some points on adult education have been added.

The general and minimum aim of these proposals is—*universal literacy within fifteen years, i.e. by 1961*. This is no arbitrary period, but is based on the practical experience of mass literacy campaigns among the formerly backward republics of the Soviet Union.[2] The Africans are hungry for literacy. They will not regard fifteen years as too short a period in which to achieve it.

## The School System

A Government school system subject to democratic local control by Africans must be established. The old District Boards must give way to Education Committees appointed by African District Councils.[3] In this way the initiative of the people will be harnessed,

[1] Col. 186, 1944. The aims of mass education set out in the Colonial Office report are:

"1. The wide extension of schooling for children, with the goal of universal schooling within a measurable time.

"2. The spread of literacy among adults, together with a widespread development of literature and libraries, without which there is little hope of making literacy permanent.

"3. The planning of mass education as a movement of the community itself, involving the active support of the local community from the start.

"4. The effective co-ordination of welfare plans and mass education plans, so that they form a comprehensive and balanced whole."

[2] *Soviet Light on the Colonies*, Barnes, p. 209.

[3] For proposed local government structure, see pp. 201–2.

the planning of targets and methods will become possible. Where in a population of nearly 4 millions hardly more than 100,000 are Protestants and fewer Catholics[1] there is no justification for running education on denominational lines.

The main steps should be seen as follows:

(*a*) All schools serving local needs to be controlled by African District Councils, under supervision of the Department of Education.

(*b*) Councils to be given Government grants adequate to allow them to maintain and expand educational services without imposing further heavy burdens on their ratepayers. Such grants to include, of course, those now paid to missions.

(*c*) All teacher training and secondary schools to be taken out of the hands of the missions and, at this stage, controlled by the Department of Education.

The main question, as the Africans well recognise, is not, however, the future of a few mission schools, but a great expansion in the *total number* of schools.

Elementary and primary education should be extended in two stages. The first and immediate stage is to introduce free, compulsory education for children between seven and twelve years of age in towns such as Nairobi, Mombasa, Nakuru and Kisumu.[2] The second stage, to be reached within ten years, is free compulsory education for *all* children in Kenya within that age-group. Up to the moment primary schools have been largely of an expensive boarding-school type because the missionaries felt the need to bring the children out of range of tribal and family influences. A swift expansion such as we visualise means that day primary schools must predominate.

We should not forget the children living on European farms. The District Councils of the settled areas must provide facilities at least equal to those given by the African District Councils.

For higher education, certain measures are urgent. In 1945 only 226 students (two of them girls) were attending the four secondary schools in Kenya. The number of these schools should be increased threefold within the next five years and be able to take in not less than 700 students a year. A substantial number of bursaries should be made available at once to Africans for study in overseas universities.[3] The third measure is the immediate construction of a central

[1] See *Commission on Higher Education in East Africa*, Col. 142, 1937.

[2] See speech by Mr. Mathu, K.L.C., January 11th, 1946, on this point.

[3] Makerere College in Uganda has not yet reached university status.

polytechnic offering advanced technical and scientific training, which would help to provide, among other things, the skilled personnel for Government and municipal departments.

*It will not be enough to build more schools. The whole spirit* and content of the education given must be drastically changed. To teach the Catechism, English geography and the tricks of British monarchs, as has been the practice, is not good enough. The present English School Certificate course has not proved satisfactory even in this country. It has been a fantastic imposition on African children.

The achievements of world civilisation must be approached from the realities and problems of Kenya. The present narrow view of vocational training must be swept away. Such training must be an integral part of a new and balanced school curriculum which aims at giving an all-round education and fitting the pupils to choose what part they will play in the life of their country. New textbooks will be needed. The active co-operation of African teachers should be sought in the preparation of these books. This is work which must be speedily carried out if the rest of the programme is not to be delayed.

The question of the language to be used in educational instruction assumes importance in Kenya. Because of the undeveloped state of the vernacular tongues and the lack of books in the vernacular, only the first stages of education can be taught in the child's own language. Higher education can only be his if he knows a European language. History has determined that this second language must be English. Egged on by bigoted settlers who see the acquirement of English by the Africans as a presumption of equality, the authorities have, however, attempted to give Swahili a place of unwarranted importance in the educational system.

Swahili is spoken with facility only by the mixed community of Mombasa and by traders, though it has now gained greater currency, and has been found useful as a means of communication between people of different tribes. It is spoken (very badly) by European settlers when giving orders to their employees, and has therefore become the "master and servant" language. Though allied to the Bantu languages, it is quite incomprehensible to tribes who belong to other language groups, such as the Luo and the Masai. The imposition of this so-called *lingua franca* on the schoolchild results in an intolerable amount of unnecessary work. He must learn his first lessons in his mother tongue, learn a different tongue (Swahili) in order to master the next stage, and learn yet another foreign

tongue (English) in order to complete his education. It should be noted, too, that while the use of Swahili has been officially encouraged, neither the Ordinances nor the Legislative Council Debates are translated into it, and that the number of books available in the language (mainly written under missionary auspices) is scanty. The only sane policy to pursue *in the schools* is that of giving as much early instruction as possible in the vernacular, introducing *English* for the more advanced stages.

No expansion of school education is possible without a large increase in the number of teachers. There are about 2,000 certificated African teachers in Kenya to-day.[1] If the whole of the estimated school population is to be educated in, say, classes of forty, nine times as many (18,000) will be needed. The Kenya Education Department has always tended to sigh wistfully after European staff, which it can neither recruit nor afford. It must be recognised that the only real solution lies in the recruitment and training of African teachers. To do this successfully, a new approach must be made to pay and training facilities. For many years domestic servants were paid more than teachers in the lower-grade schools. So poor were the terms of service that men became teachers only when there was nothing better. During the war teachers flocked into the armed forces, attracted by the much higher rates of pay.

The Advisory Council on African Education recently proposed new monthly salary scales[2] which were first rejected by the Government, who then compromised with bad grace, in view of an impending teachers' strike. These new scales represent an improvement in the initial salary, but the increments and maximums are reduced, while a long period of service and the approval of the headmaster will be required before the maximum can be reached.

Even so, the starting rate for elementary teachers is scarcely

[1] There are 4,799 teachers in employment in Government, voluntary-aided (mission) and unaided schools. Of these only 2,094 are certificated. The number of certificated teachers qualified to teach in primary schools is only 110. Makerere trained teachers number only thirty-two, the rest are elementary and lower primary teachers. In 1945, 348 elementary, 174 lower primary, thirty-six primary and six Makerere teachers were undergoing training. K.L.C., September 25th, 1946.

[2] *Elementary Teachers:* 40 sh. by 2/50 to 60 sh. by 3 sh. to 90 sh..
*Lower Primary Teachers:* 55 sh. by 2/50 to 60 sh. by 3 sh. to 90 sh. by 5 sh. to 120 sh.
*Primary Teachers:* 75 sh. by 3 sh. to 90 sh. by 5 sh. to 120 sh. by 7/50 to 150 sh.
*Report of Standing Finance Committee on Draft Estimates for 1946.*

enough for subsistence, let alone enough to maintain a family and buy essential books and papers. The minimum starting rate should be 60 sh. a month, with rapid increments to at least 120 sh. in the case of elementary teachers and correspondingly higher maximums for other grades.

A successful recruitment campaign will be useless if there is a bottleneck in training. In the whole of Kenya there are no more than twelve teacher-training schools: six for elementary teachers, five for lower primary teachers, and one for primary teachers. All are controlled by missions.

These schools must be taken out of the hands of the missions and become the nucleus of a more extensive Government system of teacher training. The target within the next five years should be the training of an additional 4,000 teachers. Splendid material will be found among the ex-Askari and other sections of the people if the right appeal is made.

### *Adult Education*

We have already mentioned the Colonial Office *Report on Mass Education in African Society*. The framework of a mass education experiment as envisaged in this *Report* is a community with a particular problem to overcome, such as soil erosion, or a high infantile mortality rate. The campaign for universal literacy or improvement in living conditions would be centred round this problem, which would act as a stimulus to learn. In this way the community would feel that learning was of direct use to it. Local pride would be built up by encouragement of what was best in local traditions of song, dance, etc.

Directing the campaigns would be specially appointed Mass Education Officers, who would work in close co-operation with the District Commissioners. Work among the people would be carried out by teams of experts—health visitors, agricultural advisers, etc.—working under the Mass Education Officer. Co-operating with the official team would be local organisations and individuals serving in a voluntary capacity.

Mass education would be developed primarily through literature made available in libraries and by the Press. Other mediums would be employed where suitable—such as broadcasting, films, posters and exhibitions, music, dancing, the drama, painting and practical demonstration.

There is no doubt that, given a vigorous application of these

proposals to Kenya, universal literacy (and much more) could be attained in fifteen years. The warning is necessary, however, that literacy must be the *first* aim of mass education. It is literacy which will light the way to better health standards, to all economic, social and political advance. Any attempt to substitute for it welfare schemes, handicraft circles and cinemas will be an evasion of the real issue.

A mass education campaign in Kenya will have many willing allies among the Africans. The schoolchildren can help. The ex-Askari[1] and the teachers can help. Organisations such as the Kenya Africa Union must be given an important part to play in the campaign. In each area the Education Committee of the African District Council must guide and co-ordinate.

Two points in particular require special emphasis: printed materials and the development of the vernacular languages.

A mass attack on illiteracy means a steady supply of reading material in the vernaculars and in English. Books in English have not been easy to get in Kenya, while books in the vernacular (apart from mission tracts) are virtually non-existent. A number of newspapers in local languages have now been started by Africans, but in general the "raw materials" for a mass education campaign are not at hand. Nor will they ever be if the Kenya Government is permitted to carry out its present stone-wall tactics.

At the end of 1944[2] Archdeacon Beecher asked the Government whether it was aware that at least 750,000 books—250,000 from local sources—were required for the existing literate population and to meet the needs of a mass literacy campaign. He asked also if the Government would take up with the Colonial Office the question of publishing priority for books designed for Africans. The Government spokesman replied that it knew nothing about the first point, and that the time was not opportune for dealing with the second.

[1] Their eagerness to read and study was so great that a chaplain with the East African Forces wrote:

"You would be amazed at the sale of literature among East African soldiers. It beats anything I have ever seen in the villages. I simply cannot keep pace with the demand. When work is over a walk round the camps would show groups of Africans, here and there, reading, singing, and some studying, the place littered with books. It is the finest extra-mural university I have yet seen in Africa."

Quoted by Margaret Wrong in article, "African Affairs," in *Overseas Education*, July, 1944.

[2] K.L.C., November 15th, 1944.

Four steps must be taken immediately. First, printing facilities must be expanded within Kenya for printing books in those vernaculars which possess orthographies. Secondly, the assistance of educated Africans must be sought in writing books and translating English books into the vernacular. Thirdly, vast numbers of books of every kind must be imported from Britain. Fourthly, a number of Africans must be sent to Britain for a linguistic training in the School of Oriental and African Languages, so that they may go back to Kenya with a scientific knowledge of the local languages and the ability to enrich and develop them.

In this chapter an outline of the present system of education in Kenya has been given and proposals made for transforming it. But there are lessons to be learnt from outside Kenya. In both China and the U.S.S.R. mass education owes its success to its integration in a rising tide of nationalism and democracy. So must it in Africa.

"In this changing world, Africans, adult and children, must learn on the one hand to use the new instruments of the West . . . and on the other Africans must learn to preserve their unity and prepare for a new African nationhood and a new African democracy. . . ."[1]

[1] Article entitled, "An African writes on Needs of Adult Education," based on pamphlet of the Nigerian Union of Teachers, *Colonial Review*, February, 1939.

CHAPTER IX

# ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL POLICY: I.

## National Income

COLONIAL rule means the distortion of a country's economy, a thwarting of the development of its native peoples. The national income estimates which follow (the first to be made for Kenya) give a "bird's-eye" view of Kenya's economic structure and show the magnitude of this distortion.

These estimates, offered as approximations, are derived mainly from official data. There are difficulties inherent in constructing such estimates for a country where subsistence farming is still widespread, quite apart from the inadequacy of Kenya's statistics. "The colonial national income estimator has thus not only a different approach from that of his colleagues in the United Kingdom or the United States. He gets a different result. The construction of national income tables for colonial territories must often be no more than an attempt to establish the order of magnitude attributable to each income group, industry, or item of expenditure in the national total. Most of the individual figures have little or no intrinsic value because the information is altogether too scanty for close estimates. They are, however, essential elements in the picture of the economy, particularly of the more backward colonies, suggested by all available evidence."[1]

The year 1930 has been chosen as the most recent date for which a census of African agriculture exists. While the national income has greatly increased and has possibly trebled since 1930, the relative position of the African has, if anything, deteriorated (see Table 23).

Table 24 is an attempt to divide the income between Europeans, Indians and Africans.

Before drawing any conclusions, the household budget on p. 152 of a South Kavirondo family (prepared in 1932) will serve as a check on the estimate given of African income per head.

This budget gives an income per head per annum of 23.96 sh. as compared with 21 sh. in our own estimates.

[1] Phyllis Deane, *Measuring National Income in Colonial Territories*, December, 1945.

TABLE 23

*Net National Income at Factor Cost (Output), 1930 (£ million)*[1]

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| I. Primary production (African) | 2·25 | |
| II. Primary production (European and Indian) | 3·25 | |
| III. Total I and II | | 5·50 |
| IV. Mining | 0·01 | |
| V. Manufacture | 0·30 | |
| VI. Total, IV and V | | 0·31 |
| VII. Transport | 1·25 | |
| VIII. Government expenditure on goods and services | 1·00 | |
| IX. Distribution and other services | 0·50 | |
| X. Domestic service | 0·18 | |
| XI. Total, VII, VIII, IX, and X | | 2·93 |
| Total | | 8·74 |

TABLE 24

*Net National Income (by Groups) 1930*[2]

| | £ million | £ per head |
|---|---|---|
| Africans | 3·20 | 1·1 |
| Indians | 0·75 | 18·8 |
| Europeans | 3·54 | 208·2 |
| Company Income | 0·75 | — |
| Government Income | 0·50 | — |
| Total | 8·74 | — |

[1] The price data used in estimating primary production are for farm values or, in a few cases, adjusted on the basis of export or retail figures where farm values are not available.

The figures for transport are the result of an estimated division of the total Kenya and Uganda figure, bearing in mind the entrepôt trade of the former and transport conditions in both. The Government figure is net. Distribution and certain other services contain an allowance for miscellaneous items.

[2] Company income is based on an analysis of the economic structure of Kenya in 1930 and the data on income tax for 1937. Government income is assembled from official sources, leaving European income as a residuum.

TABLE 25

*Annual Household Budget South Kavirondo Reserve*[1]

(A household of 4·36)

| *Receipts* | *Sh. cts.* | *Sh. cts.* | *Expenses* | *Sh. cts.* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| By produce of family holding: | | | | |
| (*a*) Grown and consumed . . | 64 30 | | | |
| (*b*) Grown and sold . | 13 63 | | | |
| | | 77 93 | Consumption of food . | 64 30 |
| By other earnings inside the reserve: | | | | |
| (*a*) By manufacture . | 0 08 | | | |
| (*b*) By milling . . | 0 10 | | | |
| (*c*) By Government and L.N.C. wages | 3 04 | | Tax . . . . . | 18 60 |
| (*d*) By missions . | 1 14 | | | |
| (*e*) By Indian shopkeepers, employees' wages . | 0 27 | | | |
| (*f*) By mines and other wages . | 1 05 | | Rate . . . . . | 1 62 |
| | | 5 68 | | |
| By earnings outside of the reserves: | | | Balance of free money for clothes, housing, furniture, implements . | 19 96 |
| Earnings of labourers working outside reserves . . . . | 20 87 | | | |
| | | 20 87 | | |
| Total . . . | | 104 48 | Total . . . . . | 104 48 |

To complete this statistical picture of Kenya's economy the distribution of the "active" population is given for 1945 (Table 26).

What conclusions are to be drawn from these four tables?

First, that Kenya is an overwhelmingly agrarian country. In 1930 almost 63 per cent. of her national income was drawn from primary production. In 1945 over 90 per cent. of her African adult population was engaged in agriculture. And even this seriously understates the true position, since so many of the services are directly connected with agriculture. The development of manufacturing and mining has been too small to affect this conclusion.

[1] Prepared by Major C. E. V. Buxton, D.C., South Kavirondo, and published in Carter Report, Vol. 3, p. 2,361.

TABLE 26

*Active Population and Occupational Distribution*

| Year | Total population | Total active population[1] | Distribution of "Actives" Agriculture[2] | Per cent. | Industry and mining[3] | Per cent. | Building services, etc.[4] | Per cent. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1945 | 3,825,000 | 1,701,900 | 1,534,360 | 90·17 | 16,631 | 0·98 | 150,909 | 8·85 |
| (The corresponding figures for Poland were)[5] | | | | | | | | |
| 1931 | 32,107,000 | 15,006,000 | — | 64·9 | — | 16·9 | — | 18·2 |

Second, that there is gross inequality between races. Seventeen thousand Europeans in 1930 were responsible for three-fifths of the value of total primary production (with African labour, of course) while over 2½ million Africans accounted for only two-fifths. On an average, the European (excluding companies) had an income *two hundred times greater* than the African. If anything, this inequality is even more pronounced to-day than in 1930.

Third, that the abject poverty of the Africans, who constitute the great majority of the population, prevents any real expansion of the internal market. The South Kavirondo budget shows a spare cash income of little more than 4 sh. 50 cts. per head with which to buy clothing, furniture, implements, pay for further education, etc.

Since 1930 an increase in trade and production of cash crops has produced some wealthy Africans, judged by present African standards. This prosperity for a few has been, however, more than balanced by the growing scourge of soil erosion and the increasing pressure on the land in the reserves.

To-day in several areas of Kenya the position has certainly grown

[1] All males and females sixteen to forty-five years of age.

[2] Includes juvenile and resident native labourers, but this does not affect figures greatly. The figure is derived by deducting from total "active population" those engaged in non-agricultural employment according to 1945 Labour Census.

[3] Mining estimated at 1944 figure: 3,306. Industry at 13,325 as given in 1945 Labour Census.

[4] Includes public and Government services, but not men in the armed forces.

[5] Taken from P.E.P. *Economic Development of South Eastern Europe*, 1945.

worse. A rough balance sheet for Machakos District in 1944 shows family remittances as £160,000. But expenditure was £125,000 on famine relief and food; Government and Local Native Councils took away £33,000. The cash balance left in the reserve to meet all other needs was £2,000.[1] The population of Machakos in that year was 231,938,[2] which meant a spare cash balance of *less than 2d. per head per year!*[3]

"I have served in this country for nearly twenty years, and am compelled to argue that, with the exception of a few, there is still widespread poverty among the 'common people.' . . . And I maintain that to-day, in 1946, that poverty is to all intents and purposes as deep as it was when I first made the acquaintance of the Africans in this country."[4]

The Kenya Government and the Colonial Office may never have estimated national income, but they are well aware of the real facts of the situation. Nevertheless, their financial and economic policy, backed by a small number of wealthy settlers and business men, has increased the burden on the African.

## Public Finance

The main features of public finance in Kenya are: first, the heavy burden of public debt and interest charges; second, the growing cost of an alien bureaucracy whose salaries, pensions, and gratuities rob the people each year of many thousands of pounds; third, the use of fiscal powers to protect the wealthy and still further impoverish the Africans.

### *Public Debt*

In the epoch of imperialism private capital has shown little desire for pioneering, but a great passion for safe investment. Nowhere is this clearer than in the history of capital investment in British tropical Africa. An analysis has shown that public listed capital (up

[1] Facts given by Mr. Tomkinson, P.C., Central Province, in K.L.C., November 28th, 1945.

[2] Blue Book, 1944.

[3] Even assuming that half the population was in the Army or living outside the Machakos District, the 2d. would merely become *4d.*

[4] Archdeacon Beecher, K.L.C., September 25th, 1946. "Such poverty," says a Government sub-committee, "in many areas and for at least ten years past has been increasing and is still increasing." *Report of the Development Committee, 1946,* Vol. 2, App, p. 224.

to 1937) amounted to £163,661,000, but private listed capital totalled only £139,338,000. That is to say, investment under Government auspices was approximately 54 per cent. of total listed capital invested in tropical Africa.[1] The position was reversed only in territories like Northern Rhodesia, where great mineral wealth awaited exploitation.

In Kenya, where no substantial mineral deposits had been located (prior to 1930) and private investment was therefore small, investment as the result of borrowing by Government assumed great importance. Within the space of fifteen years (1921–36) a public debt was built up totalling £17,560,600.

TABLE 27

*Details of Public Debt and Its Distribution*

| *Loan* | *Amount* £ | *Date repayable* | *Interest, per cent.* | *Floated at* | | *For Colony* | *For transport* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | £ | | | £ | s. | £ | |
| 1921 | 5,000,000 | 1946–56 | 6 | 95 | | 754,614 | 4,245,386 |
| 1927 | 5,000,000 | 1948–58 | 5 | 99 | 10 | — | 5,000,000 |
| 1928 | 3,500,000 | 1950 | 4½ | 95 | 10 | 659,669 | 2,840,331 |
| 1930 | 3,400,000 | 1961–71 | 4½ | 98 | 10 | 2,233,909 | 1,166,091 |
| 1933 | 305,000 | 1957–67 | 3½ | 98 | 10 | 305,600 | — |
| 1936 | 375,000 | 1961 | 3 | 100 | | — | — |

This represents a public debt which is almost entirely an external one raised in the London money market. Only in 1945 was a loan raised within Kenya itself.

It will be noticed that the rates of interest are extraordinarily high. In 1935 Kenya showed the highest rate of interest—5·06 per cent.—of all the British territories in Africa. The expenses of issue were extortionate. For instance, out of the £3,953,792 borrowed by the Colony on its own account up to 1933 (i.e. excluding the railway), 4½ per cent. or £181,663 went on expenses of issue and deduction for discount. In the case of the loans used for railway and harbour construction, the corresponding outlay on expenses of issue rose to 5·7 per cent., or £766,690, on loans totalling £13,251,808 (up to 1933).

[1] See Frankel, Table 28.

The total annual interest and sinking fund charges are now well above £1,000,000. And the burden of these charges is aggravated by the fact that they are fixed charges, irrespective of prosperity and depression. The general effect of this public debt has been to transfer wealth created within Kenya to parasitic coupon-clippers whose risks are non-existent.

But loans, even at these high rates, might find some justification if they were devoted to developing the all-round productive capacity of the country. This was not the case. The money borrowed for railways and harbours went to assist chiefly the small community of European farmers.[1] The uses to which the colony put money borrowed on its own account were even more unproductive from the African viewpoint—as this table shows:

TABLE 28

*Purposes for which Colony borrowed Money on Its Own Account.*[2]

| | £ |
|---|---|
| 1. Repayment of loan moneys received from H.M. Treasury before 1921 (Mombasa water supply) | 84,469 |
| 2. Repayment to revenue of advances made from revenue for military expenditure in connection with war and purchase of reserve stores for railway and steamer services | 600,000 |
| 3. Public buildings | 1,496,516 |
| 4. Water supplies | 225,800 |
| 5. Communications | 333,678 |
| 6. Loans to local authorities | 506,581 |
| 7. Land and Agricultural Bank | 500,000 |
| 8. Unallocated | 24,266 |
| 9. Interest out of capital | 819 |
| 10. Expenses of issue and deduction for discount | 181,663 |
| | 3,953,792 |

It will be noted that 38 per cent. of the total has been spent on public buildings. Should the reader have some vision of African schools and hospitals going up all over Kenya, the expenditure on public buildings has been subdivided, with the following result:

[1] Cf., pp. 57–82.

[2] *Economic Development Committee*, 1935, p. 16.

TABLE 29

*Expenditure on Public Buildings up to December, 1934*[1]

| | £ | £ |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Housing for Government servants: | | |
| (a) Government House, Nairobi | 75,460 | |
| (b) Government House, Mombasa | 20,916 | |
| (c) Other housing, Mombasa | 85,610 | |
| (d) Other housing Nairobi | 228,785 | |
| (e) Other housing | 177,344 | |
| | | 588,115 |
| 2. Medical buildings | | 129,297 |
| 3. Educational buildings: | | |
| (a) European schools (five) | 236,693 | |
| (b) Indian school | 56,472 | |
| (c) African industrial school | 26,628 | |
| (d) Other | 10,235 | |
| | | 330,028 |
| 4. Other Buildings: | | |
| (a) Customs offices | 25,376 | |
| (b) Law Courts, Nairobi | 136,000 | |
| (c) Other | 287,700 | |
| | | 449,076 |
| | | £1,496,516 |

Surveying the expenditure of the loan funds, one can say that out of little less than £4 million, expenditure on exclusive European interests accounted for well over £3 million. In proportion to the sums involved the contribution to the productive life of the Africans was negligible.

There is now increasing pressure for the raising of loans within Kenya, but those who can subscribe to them are afraid that "labour" ideas of cheap money might infect the Kenya Government. Thus the first loan floated within the colony in 1945 for £600,000 found few subscribers, on the grounds that the loan was for too long a period and offered only 3 per cent.[2] Voicing these complaints, one of the European representatives on the Legislative Council (the late Commander Couldrey) added: ". . . A colony like Kenya can always afford to pay an extra ½ per cent., anyhow, and possibly more, for a loan raised locally, than a loan raised overseas."[3]

[1] Based on Pim, p. 18.

[2] Of this local loan, £250,000 has been earmarked for the European Settlement Scheme.

[3] K.L.C., November 29th, 1945.

Big business men and well-to-do farmers view that "extra ½ per cent. and possibly more" with equanimity only because the burden falls most heavily on the African peasant and wage-labourer.

### *Growth of a Bureaucracy*

A country, it is said, gets the government its people deserve. But if that country is a colony, it is compelled to take all the officials for which it can afford to pay—and more!

Kenya's Civil Service may be divided into four classes or "services." First, the so-called *unified services*, which are appointed and controlled by the Secretary of State. Second, the *Kenya European Civil Service*, "inaugurated during a period of depression with two main purposes in view: firstly, to secure an economy in the cost of the Government service as a whole and, secondly, to provide attractive careers for the European youth of the colony."[1] This service is controlled by the Governor. Third, there is the *Asian Local Civil Service*. And, last, the *African Civil Service* (only organised in 1943), under the direction of an African Civil Service Board.

Racial and class differences run riot in these services, since to run them requires:

2 Pension and Superannuation Schemes.
3 Provident Funds.
8 different scales of vacation leave.
7 different scales of passage allowances.
4 different sets of Codes and Regulations; and
106 different salary scales (7 for overseas; and 72 for local service Europeans; 22 for Asians and 5 for Africans).[2]

Members of the pensionable unified service are not only well-paid, but receive house allowances, free pensions (i.e. non-contributory), free medical attention, and free passage home after serving a particular time. Those employed in the Kenya European Civil Service have not quite so many privileges. Nevertheless, their cost is substantial. The following table gives some examples at different salary points of the annual cost of a European officer to the Colony:

[1] *Surridge Report*, par. 7, quoted Hill, *Report of the Civil Service Commissioner*, 1945, p. 9.

[2] Hill, *ibid.*, p. 8.

TABLE 30

*Estimated Annual Cost of European and Asian Officers at Selected Salary Points*[1]

| Salary per annum | House allowance | Proportion of Officers' Passages | Proportion of Family Passage Allowance | Pension | Gratuity | Provident Fund | Medical Attention | Other Privileges | Total | % increase represented by "hidden emoluments" |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| A. Overseas Service: | | | | | | | | | | |
| | £ | £ | £ | £ | £ | £ | £ | £ | £ | |
| £300 | 50 | 16 | 10 | 66 | — | — | 12 | 5 | 459 | 53 |
| £600 | 90 | 24 | 18 | 129 | — | — | 12 | 5 | 878 | 46 |
| £1,000 | 150 | 32 | 20 | 216 | — | — | 12 | 5 | 1,435 | 44 |
| £1,500 | 225 | 32 | 20 | 323 | — | — | 12 | 5 | 2,117 | 41 |
| B. Local Civil Service: | | | | | | | | | | |
| £240 | — | 14 | — | — | 5 | 15 | 12 | 5 | 291 | 21 |
| £600 | — | 19 | 11 | — | 12 | 102 | 12 | 5 | 761 | 27 |
| Asian clerks: | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1st grade £300 maximum | 39 | 6 | 4 | 42 | — | — | 7 | 3 | 401 | 34 |

The reader will note the high value of "hidden emoluments" in the payment of Europeans and even Asians. The Africans receive no passage allowance or pension, and their housing is usually of the worst type. Their salaries at the lowest grade commence at £24, while the maximum for the highest grade is £315.[2] The great bulk of the African Civil Servants are in the lowest grades and cannot even afford an adequate diet.[3]

The overall cost of this Civil Service to the Colony has become crushing, since every year the bill for pensions and gratuities grows by thousands of pounds. From £24,976[4] in 1920–1 it has grown to £384,500 in 1946;[5] a fifteenfold increase in twenty-five years. The increase in pensions and gratuities was foreseen long ago and was one of the alleged motives for introducing the Kenya European Civil Service. Yet ". . . the inauguration of the Kenya European

[1] Pim, pp. 261–1. [2] Hill, pp. 47–9.

[3] Cf. *Report of Committee to Inquire whether Essentials of Life are within Economic Capacity of Officers of Government and of K. and U.R. and H.*

[4] Pim, p. 263. [5] 1946 Estimates.

Civil Service was calculated to effect in due course an appreciable reduction in the Colony's pension bill. We question whether any immediate economy was affected."[1]

This expensive bureaucracy is largely employed for purposes arising directly out of White Settlement and British occupation. There are an exceptionally large number of European policemen, since law and order among the white population could not be left in the hands of Africans! Moreover, the operation of the pass laws (especially the *kipande*), already described, requires additional policemen. Again, the agricultural and veterinary and judicial services have been built up to serve the interests of the small European population. In 1936 there were 138 Europeans in Kenya in the Education Service (Civil Establishment), compared with forty in Tanganyika. Yet we know that the additional forces do not serve African education. Some other comparisons are:

| | *1936* | |
|---|---|---|
| | *Civil Establishment, Kenya* | *Civil Establishment, Tanganyika* |
| Prisons | 27 | 13 |
| Police | 108 | 63 |
| Treasury | 41 | 10 |
| Judicial and legal | 23 | 18 |

Equally revealing is a comparison of the proportion of Europeans on the Civil Establishment to the total population:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Kenya | (1936), | 1 European to every 1,888 inhabitants |
| Tanganyika | (1936), | 1 European to every 5,412 inhabitants |
| Uganda | (1938), | 1 European to every 4,736 inhabitants |

The pensions and gratuities of the Civil Service (while paid for by the people of Kenya) are enjoyed mainly outside the colony, and thus represent another way by which wealth is drained out of the country.

### *Taxation*

Taxation in accordance with ability to pay is rightly regarded as the principle on which a tax policy should be built. In Kenya this principle has been reversed. Those least able to pay are given the heaviest burden. Much has been written of the patriotic emotions Kenya has inspired in its white community.[2] At no time, however, have they agreed to shoulder their financial responsibilities. Every

[1] *Surridge Report*, par. 7, quoted Hill, p. 9.

[2] Huxley, Vol. 2, p. 284.

suggestion that the settler should pay an even slightly fairer share has met with bitter resistance.

Until 1927, when a special education tax was introduced, Europeans and Asiatics paid only a poll tax of 30*s.* a year. During the financial depression of 1920–1, when the Kenya Government raised the Africans' poll tax, the Colonial Office stipulated that the non-African tax be also raised. An income tax ordinance was passed in 1920, but never operated, owing to the opposition of the settlers,[1] who pleaded that the depression had hit them hard. No such plea was countenanced on the Africans' behalf.

The world crisis of 1931, which played havoc with the finances of Kenya, prompted once again the proposal of income tax. This attempt, too, the settlers succeeded in defeating.

How heavily the burden of taxation fell on the Africans is shown by the following table:

TABLE 31

*Summary of Revenue Collected in 1931, and Racial Distribution*

| | *Europeans* | *Indians* | *Goans* | *Arabs* | *Africans* | *Indivisible* | *Total* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | £ | £ | £ | £ | £ | £ | £ |
| Direct taxation | 42,596 | 39,170 | 3,251 | 18,114 | 530,877 | — | 634,008 |
| Indirect taxation | 334,477 | 145,213 | 47,346 | 16,992 | 199,181 | 2,345 | 745,554 |
| Other taxation revenue | 109,113 | 45,406 | 4,057 | 6,241 | 11,446 | 1,936 | 178,199 |
| Other revenue (not tax) | 179,595 | 49,213 | 3,752 | 6,903 | 49,596 | 1,220,110[2] | 1,509,169 |
| Total | 665,781 | 279,002 | 58,406 | 48,250 | 791,100 | 1,224,391 | 3,066,930 |

The monstrously inequitable distribution of the tax burden is clear enough when compared with the distribution of national income.[3] Only in 1937, in exchange for political concessions, and on condition that they would not be asked to contribute to an

[1] Hailey, p. 550.

[2] Moyne, Cmd. 4093, p. 63. Includes Post Office, £168,132; reimbursements, £883,716.

[3] See p. 151.

extension of African services, did the settlers agree to the introduction of a light income tax.

How small a sacrifice this acceptance involved is shown by a comparison of Kenya's income tax rate with that of Britain for 1937 and 1944. *Assume a married man with two children and an income of £5,000 per annum.*

TABLE 32

*Income Tax, 1937*

| *Great Britain* | | *Kenya* | |
|---|---|---|---|
| *Allowances and tax payable:* | | | |
| | £ | | £ |
| Earned income relief | 300 | | Nil[1] |
| Marriage allowance | 180 | | 500 |
| Two children | 120 | | 200 |
| | £600 | | £700 |
| Taxable | £4,400 | | £4,300 |
| *Tax:* | | | |
| | £ s. d. | | £ s. d. |
| £135 at 1s. 8d. = | 11 5 0 | £700 at 1s. = | 35 0 0 |
| £4,265 at 5s. = | 1,066 5 0 | £500 at 1s. 6d. = | 37 10 0 |
| | | £1,500 at 2s. = | 150 0 0 |
| | | £1,600 at 2s. 6d. = | 200 0 0 |
| *Surtax:* | | | |
| | £ s. d. | | |
| £500 at 1s. +10% = | 27 10 0 | | |
| £500 at 1s. 3d. +10% = | 34 7 6 | | |
| £1,000 at 2s. +10% = | 110 0 0 | | |
| £1,000 at 3s. +10% = | 165 0 0 | | |
| | £1,414 7 6 | | £422 10 0 |
| *Net income remaining:* | £3,585 12 6 | | £4,577 10 0 |

The possessor of such an income would in 1937 therefore pay in Britain 30 per cent. in tax, but in Kenya less than 10 per cent.

During the war there was much complaint in Kenya of the increased rate of taxation. How did it compare with Britain in the year of the "Second Front"?

[1] In Kenya there is no distinction between earned and unearned income, as in Britain.

TABLE 33

*Income Tax, 1944*

| | Great Britain | | Kenya |
|---|---|---|---|
| *Allowances and tax payable:* | | | |
| | £ | | £ |
| Earned income relief . | 150 | .. | Nil |
| Marriage allowance . | 140 | .. | 350 |
| Child allowance . . | 100 | .. | 120 |
| | £390 | .. | £470 |
| Taxable . . . | £4,610 | .. | £4,530 |
| *Tax:* | | | |
| | £ s. d. | | £ s. d. |
| | 2,757 7 6 | | 1,459 0 0 |
| *Net Income remaining:* | | | |
| | £2,242 12 6 | .. | £3,541 0 0 |

This means that in wartime Britain, our taxpayer would pay over more than half his income. His Kenya counterpart would retain seven-tenths of his income, paying in wartime only £44 more than the British taxpayer in the peace year of 1937.

In 1944 the yield of income tax per head of the population of Britain was £45. In Kenya per head of the non-African population it was only £9.

The 1947 Kenya budget, while not reducing the basic rates of tax, provides relief (especially for education and depreciation) equal to a reduction of £200,000 in the revenue of the colony, "or approximately the sum which would have been represented by reducing the tax by 1 sh. in the £1 all round."[1]

Companies, too, get off very lightly. The rates imposed allow them to take out of the country a grossly disproportionate part of the revenue they derive from it.

TABLE 34

*Income Tax on Companies*

| | Great Britain | | Kenya |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1937 . . . . | 5s. in £1 | .. | 2s. in £1 |
| 1944 . . . . | 10s. in £1 | .. | 4s. in £1 |

[1] For footnote, see p. 164.

In war or peace, the companies in Kenya pay less than half of what they would in Britain.

Direct taxation is, of course, only part of taxation. There is also indirect taxation by way of excise duties, customs, etc. The burden of indirect taxation on the poorest section of the people is well described by Norman Leys:

"The Kenya-Uganda tariff heavily taxes, not only luxuries, but all the articles necessary to civilised life, clothing, furniture and hardware, as well as flour and every sort of foodstuff. But its most remarkable feature is its free list. That list includes goods valued at 40 per cent. of the total imports. In any ordinary country it would consist of the goods that the poorest must or ought to be encouraged to consume—tinned milk and calico, for instance. But none of such things is exempt from duty. Books and drugs are the only items on the free list that conceivably might, to some extent, reach African hands. Instead, the free list is almost entirely composed of articles that only Europeans buy, especially those of them who have land—such as lorries, machinery and fencing materials. . . . All East African life in epitome lies in the facts that the bicycle to be used by

[1] Mr. J. F. G. Troughton, Kenya Financial Secretary, reported, *E.A. and Rh.*, November 21st, 1946. Note also the income tax comparisons for 1946–7 given by Sir Wilfred Woods, *Report on a Fiscal Survey*, 1946, p. 61:

| *Income* | *Single Man* | | *Married with two children* | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | *East Africa* | *United Kingdom (1946–7)* | *East Africa* | *United Kingdom* |
| £ | £ s. d. | £ s. d. | £ s. d. | £ s. d. |
| 500 | 50 12 0 | 126 15 0 | 3 0 0 | 50 5 0 |
| 1,000 | 146 17 0 | 329 5 0 | 62 5 0 | 252 15 0 |
| 2,000 | 418 15 0 | 756 15 0 | 275 8 0 | 680 5 0 |
| 3,000 | 750 0 0 | 1,319 5 0 | 613 10 0 | 1,242 15 0 |
| 5,000 | 1,750 0 0 | 2,619 5 0 | 1,632 10 0 | 2,542 15 0 |
| 10,000 | 5,125 0 0 | 6,554 5 0 | 5,098 0 0 | 6,467 15 0 |

In spite of these favourable rates, there is widespread tax-evasion.

the peasant in Uganda who grows cotton is taxed, while the European landowner's tractor is admitted duty free. . . . Hardly any East Africans can afford artificial light. The few use candles. The candles they use pay a higher duty than those intended for use in mining gold."[1]

The relation of direct and indirect taxes and their comparison between Britain and Kenya is given below:[2]

TABLE 35

*Direct and Indirect Taxes, Britain and Kenya 1938 and 1944*

| | | 1938 | | 1944 | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | £ | *per cent of total revenue* | £ | *per cent of total revenue* |
| Great Britain | Direct taxes | 386,000,000 | 44 | 1,869,000,000 | 58 |
| | Indirect . | 337,000,000 | 39 | 1,088,000,000 | 33 |
| | | | 83 | | 91 |
| | | 1937 | | 1944 | |
| Kenya | Direct income tax . . | 104,473 | 3 | 1,054,056 | 14 |
| | Hut and poll tax . . | 534,361 | 14 | 524,719 | 7 |
| | Indirect . | 992,090 | 27 | 2,516,000 | 33 |
| | | | 44 | | 54 |

It will be noted that in Britain the percentage of total revenue contributed by indirect taxation dropped by 6 per cent. In Kenya it increased by 6 per cent. There is no doubt that the weight of this indirect taxation is felt most keenly by the Africans, who are least able to pay it.[3]

[1] N. Leys, *The Colour Bar in East Africa*, 1941, p. 85.

[2] Since this was written, Sir Wilfred Woods has given more detailed figures for Kenya. *Report*, p. 93.

[3] "In 1945, the Africans contributed one-third of the Colony's total revenue from taxation and in addition paid substantial sums by way of local Native Council rates." J. P. G. Troughton, quoted, *E.A. and Rh.*, November 21st, 1946.

Direct taxation increased in Britain by 14 per cent.; direct taxation of non-Africans in Kenya by only 11 per cent. When one considers the lower rates of tax in Kenya, it is fair to state that the non-Africans did not make the financial contribution which their wealth makes possible

## *The Drain of Wealth Abroad*

Built on a narrow base, Kenya's economic structure was badly shaken by the world crisis. While the value of agricultural exports was halved, there was no relief from the crushing burden of debt and interest charges. In 1934 these charges were equal to the value of 53 per cent. of Kenya's domestic exports.

TABLE 36

*Percentage Debt Charges to Domestic Exports and Revenue, Kenya 1928–35*[1]

(£ '000)

| *Year* | *Debt charges* | *Domestic exports* | *Per cent. of Debt to domestic exports* | *Charges per cent. of debt charges to revenue* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1928 | 542 | 3,266 | 16·6 | 17·9 |
| 1929 | 772 | 2,746 | 28·1 | 23·2 |
| 1930 | 772 | 3,423 | 22·6 | 23·9 |
| 1931 | 891 | 2,344 | 38·0 | 29·3 |
| 1932 | 1,010 | 2,281 | 44·3 | 33·6 |
| 1933 | 995 | 2,247 | 44·3 | 31·9 |
| 1934 | 1,026 | 1,910 | 53·7 | 32·3 |
| 1935 | 1,043 | 2,978 | 35·0 | 31·9 |

At the very best, these charges took up one-sixth of Kenya's exports; at the worst, they accounted for more than half. There was, of course, no question of defaulting. That is the privilege of an independent country. Devaluation was also impossible. No wonder a British historian wrote with enthusiasm: "While £145 million worth of foreign loans issued in London in the decade 1921–31 have been in default for interest payments, no loan to an Empire country in these same years has failed to produce its proper interest."[2]

[1] Frankel, p. 182.

[2] C. M. MacInnes, *Economic History of the British Empire*, 1935, p. 257.

Debt and interest charges represent only part of the drain of wealth abroad. To them must be added the payment of pensions and gratuities, most of which is believed to leave Kenya.

Moreover, it is reasonably certain that Kenya has an unfavourable balance not only of visible but also of *invisible* exports. Insurance companies are South African, Indian and British. Shipping and trading services are performed by giant concerns based outside Kenya. Similarly with mining and banking. Each year to their shareholders in London or elsewhere flows a stream of sterling earned in Kenya, and for the best part the product of African labour.

This flow of sterling abroad, perhaps amounting to one and a half million pounds a year, means low expenditure on economic and social services and heavy outlay on debt charges and pensions. This is illustrated by a summary of Government expenditure for 1937.

TABLE 37

*Expenditure, 1937*[1]

| | £ | Per cent. |
|---|---|---|
| (1) Public debt charges | 1,062,238 | 32·42 |
| (2) Administration | 1,033,407 | 31·54 |
| (3) Economic development | 343,372 | 10·48 |
| (4) Social services: | | |
| (*a*) Medical | 215,195 | 6·57 |
| (*b*) Educational | 185,465 | 5·66 |
| (*c*) Other | 2,563 | 0·08 |
| (5) Defence | 154,231 | 4·70 |
| (6) Pensions and gratuities | 219,785 | 6·71 |
| (7) Deficit on self-balancing departments | 60,418 | 1·84 |
| | 3,276,674 | 100·0 |

Barely 23 per cent. of the expenditure, it will be seen, went on economic development and social services, but almost 76 per cent. on public debt charges, pensions, defence and administration.

From this survey of public finance, it will be clear that the system is designed to rob the African people and to support a wealthy group of farmers, merchants, bureaucrats and coupon-clippers in Kenya and abroad. Because of this, it exhibits the instability shown by public finance in almost every colonial country.

[1] *Economic Survey of the Colonial Empire*, 1937.

## Industry, Power and Trade

### *Present Development and Control*

*Secondary Industries*

Three types of secondary industries existed in Kenya prior to 1939. The first and longest established type was the processing of raw materials. This took place in factories on the estates or near mines. The processing did not generally go beyond the most elementary kind necessary to prepare the products for transport. Of these products, e.g. sisal, lime, soda-ash, tanning extract, tea, coffee, gold and other metals, part was consumed locally, but the bulk was exported. The second type comprised those industries producing finished goods from local materials for local consumption. Their products included edible oils, soap, industrial alcohol, leather and leather goods, woollen and sisal textiles, insecticidal sprays and powders, bricks and tiles, canned fruits, jams and meats and milk powder. The third type converted imported raw or semi-processed materials into consumption goods: Portland cement from imported clinker, paints from imported pigments and oils, containers from imported paper and cards.

The output of secondary industries of the second and third type has never been considerable. At all times, Kenya remained primarily an exporter of agricultural products and an importer of manufactures, chiefly consumers' goods. The small development of secondary industries that occurred did so during the years of crisis when European farmers and others sought alternative sources of income and employment.

War brought no fundamental change in Kenya's economy. Britain decided that Kenya's contribution to the war effort was to lie in increasing agricultural output.[1] Though industrial development expanded in all allied *independent* countries during the war, it did not do so in the colonies because of Britain's policy of discouraging any important measure of industrialisation.[2] In the Eastern

[1] D.O.T., p. 20.

[2] India provides an excellent example of this policy. Dr. Lokanathan, Indian economist, wrote: "The contrast between India, Australia and Canada has been striking. Starting from an initially worse position than India, Australia increased her steel production rapidly, and within two years was able to manufacture aircraft, wireless and other articles directly through Government effort and also by inviting British, American and other industrialists to set up factories to replace

Hemisphere, Australia, not India, developed an aero-engine industry. In Africa, not British East or West Africa, but the Union of South Africa became the repair shop of the Middle East, supplying also ammunition, guns, armoured cars and much more.[1]

War, however, came to the frontiers of Kenya when Italy entered the war on Germany's side. Great numbers of British troops were based in Kenya, while thousands of Africans volunteered for the Army. This created heavy demands for local produce and also for manufactured goods which could no longer be imported on account of shipping difficulties. Measures were therefore taken to stimulate production of certain manufactures within Kenya.

July, 1941, saw the creation of an East African Industrial Research and Development Board (later reorganised as the East African Industrial Council) and an East African Industrial Management Board which operated projects entirely financed by public funds. The Council is still responsible to the East African Governors Conference for the development of secondary industries in British East Africa. The following developments took place in Kenya:

A pottery factory came into production in 1943 designed to produce glazed biscuit ware, such as mugs, plates and jam jars. In the same year "a caustic-soda factory came into operation with a designed daily output of 2 tons of caustic soda. In a building attached to the caustic-soda factory, the Council assembled a plant for the manufacture of general chemicals. Here were to be manufactured sodium silicate, used as a filler for paints and distempers, and as a waterproof agent; copper suphate, used in horticultural sprays, sodium sulphide, used in the de-hairing of hides; alum for water-softening; sodium arsenate, used in dips for sheep and cattle; Epsom or glauber salts; and other chemicals in short supply for which the raw materials exist locally. The plant included equipment for the production of pyrethrum extract as an insecticide, Kenya being one of the principal world producers of pyrethrum."[2]

imports. In Canada the Government created seven Government-owned corporations: four for manufacturing planes, shells, rifles and instruments, one for procuring machine tools and two for purchasing vital war commodities. In India even the manufacture of locomotives already recommended by an Export Committee for which blue-prints were ready was given up at the last moment on the ground that it was desirable to import them from abroad." Quoted in *Jobs for All*, B. T. Ranadive, November, 1945.

[1] *Overseas Reference Book of the Union of South Africa*, 1945, p. 259.

[2] D.O.T., p. 20.

Hydrogenation of oils, glass manufacture, fibre-wood and paper manufactures were other developments financed by Government grants. In addition, "the workshops in Kenya of the State-owned railway system displayed great enterprise and ingenuity in the successful production of a variety of commodities essential to the war effort, outside the range of the workshops' normal activity."[1]

A venture to manufacture from local raw materials goods suitable for consumption by Africans was taken out of the hands of its civil management and operated under military direction. The output, consisting of leather and leather manufactures (including footwear), woollen blankets, etc., was used entirely by the Forces.

Not all development took place under Government auspices. Private individuals began the manufacture of glue and brush fibres, and extended pre-war activities by production of polishes, dubbin, bath bricks, starch, tooth powder and paste, sanitary towels, aerated waters and non-aerated drinks, wallboards, concrete revivers and so on.

All these activities did not amount to large-scale expansion and the capital behind them was small. The Government, which alone could initiate large-scale schemes, chose not to do so and, as suggested later, may even undo what it has done.

### *Commerce*

Private capital may not have interested itself on any large scale in industrialisation, but it has certainly taken a keen interest in Kenya's trade. A good deal of Kenya's trade is in the hands of Indian merchants. On the European side, however, apart from firms which specialise in the marketing of coffee or other crops, there are four powerful trading concerns: Mitchell Cotts & Co. Ltd., Dalgety and Co. Ltd., Smith, Mackenzie & Co. Ltd., and the K.F.A. The K.F.A. is omitted from this section, since it has been described in a previous chapter. The other three all prove that the British Empire is held together by a powerful cash nexus as much as by the British flag.

First we take *Dalgety & Co. Ltd.*, which is known in Kenya to buy maize from the Africans in a good season and sell it back to them in a bad season at very much higher prices. The company started out as Australian merchants. To-day it has five branches in Victoria, eight in New South Wales, eight in Queensland, twelve in other

[1] D.O.T., p. 22.

parts of Australia. It operates in a big way in New Zealand (twenty branches), and it has found its way into East Africa, where it has three branches. Its issued capital is £6,500,000, and even at the height of the world economic crisis it did not sink below a 5 per cent. dividend. The stability of the company is more than matched by the wide interests of its directors.

John Macmillan, for instance, sits on the boards of the Aberdeen and Commonwealth Line Ltd., the Beldam Packing and Rubber Co. Ltd., the National Bank of New Zealand Ltd. and the South African Coaling Depots Ltd. These represent only half his directorships.

From the Australian bush and the African reserve to Welwyn Garden City is no great journey for A. K. Graham, who is a director of Welwyn Garden City Ltd. and Welwyn Garden City Electricity Supply Co. Ltd., as well as two important insurance companies.

One of the directors, Sir E. L. Fletcher, has been Vice-Chairman and Hon. Treasurer of the British Empire League. But the outstanding man among them appears to be Major-General Sir John Humphrey Davidson, K.C.M.G., C.B., D.S.O. His interests include the National Bank of Egypt, the Union Bank of Australia Ltd., Army and Navy Stores Ltd., two insurance companies, and Vickers Ltd. From 1918–31 Sir John was Tory M.P. for the Fareham Division of Hants. Aristocracy is represented by Brigadier-General the Earl of Gowrie who joined the Board after a long term (1936–44) as Governor-General of Australia.

Next to be considered is *Mitchell Cotts & Co. Ltd.*, which acts as general merchants, coaling contractors, ship-owners and shipping agents in England and in south-east and north Africa. It owns several shipping companies (the Saint Line Ltd., the Sun Shipping Co. Ltd. and others); it has branch concerns registered in the Middle East, East Africa, South Africa, Canada and the U.S.A. It owns African Plastic Industries (Pty.) Ltd., as well as East African Sisal Estates Ltd.

Since 1940 its dividends have been maintained at a steady 15 per cent.

An interesting feature of its directors is the wide interests several of them have in heavy industry and mining. Leonard Aldridge, for example, is also director of Associated Manganese Mines of South Africa Ltd., Dunderland Dross Ore Co. Ltd., Dunswart Iron and Steel Works, Metropolitan Gas Meters Ltd., as well as Tilmanstone (Kent) Collieries Ltd. These are but a few of his directorships, which

illustrate the "vertical combines" of textbooks. D. C. Holmes is a director of the Huelva Copper and Sulphur Mines Ltd., as well as the National Metal and Industrial Finance Co. Ltd. One director, Alexander Hamilton, finds it profitable, not only to trade in the Middle East, but to help shape its opinions. He is a director of Middle East Newspapers and Publicity Ltd.

The third major trading company is *Smith, Mackenzie & Co. Ltd.*, a limb of the powerful British firm, Gray, Dawes & Co. This company, which acts in addition as general managers of African Wharfage Co. Ltd. and the African Marine and General Engineering Co. Ltd., Mombasa, appears thus to have a near-monopoly of stevedoring and shorehandling work in the port of Mombasa.

At least until the last year or two, the African Wharfage Co. employed chiefly casual labour at 2 sh. per day of nine hours. The distress among these labourers was an important factor in the 1939 Mombasa strike.

One director of Smith, Mackenzie & Co. Ltd., Mr. W. G. Nicol, has long been engaged in Kenya politics. Another, Mr. G. F. Hotblack, is on the boards of the P. & O. Steam Navigation Co., the British India Steam Navigation Co., and other shipping firms. His merits were recognised by the City of London, where he has been Commissioner for Land Tax and Commissioner for Income Tax.

It is clear that the shipping and entrepôt trade performed in the port of Mombasa, as well as a large part of the general importing and exporting of Kenya, are in the hands of a few giant trading firms with widespread interests within and outside the British Empire.

### *Mining*

There were once high hopes that Kenya would become a second Rand, and a good deal of encouragement has been given to mining. Gold had been known to exist in the colony for many years, but only after 1931, when it was discovered at Kakamega, was there any considerable rise in output. The discoveries at Kakamega entailed yet another shameless rape of African land. Kakamega itself was within the boundaries of the Kavirondo Reserve. Only a short while before the discoveries, the Government had pledged the inviolability of the reserve boundaries. But the fact that gold was located in possibly large quantities led the Kenya Government to go back on its pledge, and an Ordinance was hastily passed making it legal for mining by Europeans to take place. Settlers bankrupted by the

economic crisis, adventurers and mining syndicates rushed in to peg their claims. By 1933, however, the workings, chiefly alluvial, of the small men were nearly all held under option by two or three large companies. At first the development of lode mining entailing expensive machinery was retarded by the fact that cheap African labour was available. The Mining Department wrote in 1936: "The total production of alluvial gold increased somewhat during the year owing to the work of two larger companies in Kakamega. These companies, after careful consideration, found that most efficient working could be carried out by taking advantage of the cheap native labour, in conjunction with very simple plant, rather than by using more elaborate and costly plant with less labour."[1]

Nevertheless, any extensive working could only be by lode mining, which the large companies alone could afford to develop. Between 1933 and 1938 alluvial mining never exceeded 4,358 oz. in a year, whereas lode rose from 10,487 to 88,137 oz. at the end of that period. Employing before the war more than 11,000 Africans, it became an export of great importance, as the following figures show.

| | *Total Value (£ '000)* | *Per cent. of Kenya's domestic exports* |
|---|---|---|
| 1934 | 69 | 4 |
| 1941 | 696 | 15 |
| 1944 | 446 | 11 |

The mining companies have had every opportunity to make big profits. The wages paid to African miners have been trifling. Between 1937 and 1939 not a halfpenny was paid in royalties on gold won. When, on the outbreak of war, the price of gold rose from 148 sh. to 168 sh. per fine ounce, a proposal was made to impose a gold premium tax. The East African Chamber of Mines and the Kenya Mining Association succeeded in squashing the proposal. It was then mooted that a 5 per cent. royalty be reintroduced. Once again the mine-owners' protests prevailed.

A brief analysis of the major gold-owning interests in Kenya shows clearly that powerful world syndicates are at work.

The first group to consider are those controlled by or closely connected with the *Leonora Corporation Ltd.*, a mining finance company holding interests in the Tanami Gold Mining Syndicate Ltd., Rosterman Gold Mines Ltd. and other mining companies

[1] *Report of Mining and Geological Department*, 1936, p. 4.

outside Kenya. The three directors of this Corporation, W. M. Kirkpatrick, Captain A. H. Moreing and E. A. Loring, also sit on the Board of the *Tanami Gold Mining Syndicate Ltd.*, which holds a substantial interest in the Pakaneusi Prospecting and Development Co. Ltd. (owning property in Nairobi) and the Borderland Syndicate Ltd. (formed to develop properties on the Kenya-Uganda border). They are, in addition, interested in mining companies in India, Swaziland and Central Europe.

The most productive mine in Kenya to-day, Rosterman Gold Mines Ltd., is one of the group. One director, Colonel G. T. S. Scovell, is Chairman of the Compressor and Pneumatic Tool Hire Co Ltd., while a colleague, I. Anderson, besides stockbroking interests, is recorded as a director of Lena Goldfields Ltd. (still waiting for the Russian counter-revolution no doubt).

On an East African scale, *Tanganyika Concessions Ltd.* is more impressive. Its interest in Kenya lies in Kentan Gold Areas Ltd. in which it has a major interest. But Kentan Gold Areas Ltd. is merely *a small part of a £10,000,000 concern which has important interests* in the Belgian Congo (Union Minière du Haut-Katanga), in Portuguese East Africa (Benguela Railway Co.) and in Tanganyika (Geita Gold Mining Co. Ltd.).

The interests of its directors range far beyond Africa. Maurice Hely-Hutchinson has taken to investment trusts in a big way and still finds time for the Milk Marketing Board. Most enterprising of his colleagues (which include Earl Gray and General Sir Francis Wingate) is the Hon. A. O. Crichton, director of twenty-four companies which include fourteen investment trusts, four insurance companies and several real estate and mining companies.

In *Kenya Consolidated Goldfields* we have a nice blend of local and British business men. The Kenya side is represented by Major F. W. Cavendish-Bentinck (already introduced) and J. L. Riddoch (important transport owner in Nyanza). Britain is represented by Sir Neville Pearson (Country Life Ltd. and George Newnes Ltd.) and Sir P. W. Everett (East Anglia Daily Times Ltd.; Standard Book Cloth and Leather Cloth Co. Ltd.).

"'Tis thou," says Timon of Athens, addressing gold, "'tis thou that rigg'st the bark . . ." and a surprising number of the directors mentioned here have been active in rigging the bark of State. In the Leonora Corporation we appear to have a good part of the former leadership of the Liberal-National Party. W. M. Kirkpatrick, was Liberal-National M.P. for Preston, 1931–7. The Board of Trade

sent him on a mission to China in 1937–8. The next year he negotiated the purchase and transfer of Turkish public utilities from the Germans to the Turkish Government. One of his colleagues, Captain A. H. Moreing, was Liberal-National M.P. for Camborne Division, Cornwall, from 1924–9. Another, Colonel G. J. S. Scovell, was General Secretary of the Liberal-National Party 1921–2.

Spokesman for them all is Maurice Hely-Hutchinson, Tory M.P. for Hastings, 1937–45. Looking over his directorships and his family connections, no one will question his sincerity when he wrote: "Finance is my trade. I have learned that it is the mother of all business; whose father is the desire for profit."[1]

It is simpler now to understand the political power of the East African Chamber of Mines. The vested interests which have their home in Kenya are those which constitute the backbone of Toryism in Britain.

It is as well to introduce at this point the *Magadi Soda Company Ltd.*, a subsidiary of I.C.I., which has a monopoly of the exploitation of Kenya's greatest single mineral deposit. Its lease runs to the year 2023 and includes 348 square miles, with deposits of natural soda covering thirty square miles in Lake Magadi,[2] with a ninety-three-mile railway thrown in (at a rental of 5 sh. per annum). African labourers at Lake Magadi are paid approximately 2 sh. a day for work that is dirty and isolated. The nominee of the Kenya Government is H. F. Marriott, a director of Central America Exploration (Consolidated) Ltd. and the Panama Corporation (Canada) Ltd. The Chairman of the company is Sir John Nicholson, a deputy governor of I.C.I. and on the boards of British Nylon Spinners Ltd., Canadian Industries Ltd. and many other companies.

### *Power*

There are no complications in dealing with the development and control of electric power in Kenya, since one company, *East African Power and Lighting Co.*, enjoys a legal monopoly. It supplies an area of 1,325 square miles around Nairobi as well as the island of Mombasa. It controls the Tanganyika Electric Supply Co., and it has been granted licences for fifty years in Uganda.

True to form, private monopoly keeps the rates high and retards

[1] *Capitalism*, 1933, p. 30.

[2] Subject to royalties of 2*s.* a ton raw and 3*s.* a ton manufactured soda (temporarily reduced to 1*s.* 6*d.* per ton).

development, particularly in the promising field of hydro-electricity. The picture at the moment of hydro-electric development is:

| *Station* | *River* | *Kw. installed* | *Proposed new installation* |
|---|---|---|---|
| Tana | Maragua | 4,500 | 9,000 |
| Ndula No. 1 | Thika | 4,000 | Nil |
| Ndula No. 2 | Thika | 250 | Nil |
| Maragua | Maragua | 100 | Nil |

Most of the power in Kenya to-day is being generated by steam and Diesel stand-by plants. Wherever electric power is available, it is used, in spite of high rates. The railway workshops and every important manufacturing concern in Nairobi use this power almost exclusively. Sisal estates and mealie-mill grinders make use of special low off-peak rates and European farmers use it when they can get it. But the African does not and cannot use it, since he cannot afford it, and it is generated chiefly in European areas.

The East African Power and Lighting Co. though powerful in Kenya, is a tiny offshoot (yielding 7 per cent.) of the immense Power Securities Corporation Ltd. It would take a good deal of space to describe the ramifications of this giant public utility concern. Its directors sit on the boards of electricity companies from Nigeria to Bagdad. Mr. William Shearer, who is Chairman and Manager of the parent corporation, has, *inter alia*, the following directorships: Balfour, Beatty and Co. (Chairman), Commercial Bank of Scotland Ltd., Jerusalem Electric and Public Service Corporation Ltd. (Chairman), Metropolitan Electric Supply Co. Ltd., Perak River Hydro-Electric Power Co. Ltd. (Chairman), Scottish Power Co. Ltd. (Chairman). And this by no means exhausts the list of the power companies in which he is interested. Mr. Shearer is an open opponent of Labour's nationalisation policy in Britain.

### *Credit and Finance*

Apart from merchants, the main sources of finance and credit which exist in Kenya are three joint-stock banks, *Barclays (Dominion, Colonial and Overseas)*, *Standard Bank of South Africa* and the *National Bank of India* (all of which are controlled by British capital, with a mixture of South African), and the Government-owned *Agricultural and Land Bank*. The latter it will be noted has

a limited function; the financial scene is therefore dominated by the joint-stock banks.

In Kenya's sunbeam period, these banks lent money to the farmers at anything from 8 to 10 per cent. When crisis came they operated their traditional policy and shut down on credit at the moment when it was most required. When European farmers were mortgaged to the hilt and the wages of Africans were at least halved, these banks remained wonderfully prosperous. Throughout the crisis the Standard Bank of South Africa did not declare a dividend less than 10 per cent. (14 per cent. in 1930–1), while the National Bank of India from 1929–33 went even better with a steady 20 per cent. A good deal of property as well as money passed into their hands during these years. Organised to take money out of the colony, there is little evidence that the banks have proved adventurous in promoting industrial development in Kenya.

A glance at the directorships of these banks reveals a powerful body of inter-Empire financial magnates.

Directors of Barclays Bank (D.C. and O.) include the Earl of Clarendon (also director of General Electric Co. Ltd.) and Sir Ernest Oppenheimer, the powerful South African magnate who holds no less than thirty-three directorships covering investment trusts and some of the biggest diamond, gold and copper mines in South Africa and the Rhodesias.

The Standard Bank of South Africa has Lord Balfour of Burleigh (Lloyds Bank Ltd., L. and N.E.R. Co., National Bank of New Zealand, to name a few); Sir D. O. Malcom, who has twenty-one directorships (four of them in common with Sir E. Oppenheimer of Barclays), with special interests in North Rhodesian copper, but ranging as far as the British North Borneo (Chartered) Co. and extending into Portuguese East Africa. Better known to Kenya will be Brigadier-General Sir Samuel H. Wilson (sent there on a special mission in 1929), whose interest ranges from gold mines to bananas (Elders and Fyffes Ltd.) and thence to oil (Apex [Trinidad] Oilfields Ltd.).

Tea seems to be the speciality of the directors of the National Bank of India, one of whom (L. T. Carmichael) is chairman of nine tea companies as well as having insurance and shipping connections. Dignity is given to the Board of Directors by Sir R. N. Reid, who sits (1945) on the Councils of the Royal Empire Society and the East India Association.

Through these banks the financial resources and structure of

M

Kenya are linked with vested interests in every part of the Empire. They serve to bind Kenya even more securely to her colonial status.

When the banks restricted credit in 1930, sharp pressure was put on the Government to provide alternative credit for heavily mortgaged European farmers. The Land Bank was thus established in 1931. The rate of interest charged on loans appears to average 6½ per cent., and one may legitimately suspect that the high rate was fixed in order to avoid competition with the joint-stock banks and merchant lenders. In fact the joint-stock banks have gained, since the Agricultural Bank assisted European farmers to discharge their mortgages to the big banks. The following table for two selected years, 1935 and 1940, shows the use to which loans from the Agricultural Bank have been put:[1]

TABLE 38

*Utilisation of Agricultural Bank Loans*

| | *1935* *Per cent.* | | *1940* *Per cent.* |
|---|---|---|---|
| Discharge of existing mortgages | 42·5 | .. | 41·8 |
| Permanent improvements | 23·3 | .. | 18·9 |
| Purchase of land | 18·4 | .. | 25·6 |
| Purchase of stock | 6·6 | .. | 6·2 |
| Farming operations | 8·0 | .. | 6·3 |
| Purchasing of machinery implements | 1·2 | .. | 1·2 |
| | 100·0 | .. | 100·0 |

Since the time of its foundation, one African farmer has benefited by it—in 1945! As Lord Moyne gently put it: "The operations of the Land Bank extend to native as well as to non-native farms. But loans to the former will not be possible until a different system of land tenure for natives is instituted."[2]

## *The Grip of Monopoly*

This book has described how far the European farmers are on the way to complete legalised control of all agricultural activities in the

[1] Annual Reports of Land Bank.

[2] Cmd. 4093, p. 28. A question asked in the K.L.C. (July 2nd, 1946) uncovered the information that of forty-four farms acquired by the Land Bank through default, etc., thirty-seven had been resold by private treaty, involving losses of £15,220 19*sh.* principal and £7,083 16*sh.* interest.

colony. It has been shown that a small group of British and Australian merchant companies with world-wide connections exercise important influence over Kenya's trade; that the production of electric power is a complete and legal monopoly as is the exploitation of Lake Magadi; that a few mining magnates grasp the main concessions in the gold-producing areas; that three gigantic joint-stock banks dominate Kenya's credit. And if the monopolies of Britain and South Africa are not yet entrenched in the secondary industries, this is only because these are new and undeveloped. Unilevers and I.C.I., to name only two, are already active in East Africa and are unlikely to lose opportunities for extending their private empires.

CHAPTER X

# ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL POLICY: II.

## *Economic Development and Industrialisation*

IN the past decade there has been a torrent of public and private discussion on the economic development of "backward" agrarian countries. Post-war problems have made this an important question alike for the advanced capitalist countries and for the peoples of these "backward" areas.

Economic development means the fullest use of natural and human resources by the most advanced technique in the interests of the majority of the people. And the heart of such development is industrialisation—the growth of manufacturing and secondary industries.

Why is industrialisation so urgently necessary for countries like Kenya?

First, because it is essential for higher living standards. It means mechanisation and a great increase in productivity per head. It allows and demands the fullest development of the power and other resources of the country.

Secondly, without such industrialisation no firm foundation can be laid for the improvement of agriculture. It increases the equipment necessary for efficient agriculture. It enables the fullest use to be made of agricultural products by processing and utilising their by-products (see the new science of chemurgy). It relieves the pressure on the land by transferring people from agriculture to new spheres of production.

Thirdly, without such industrialisation, real political independence cannot be maintained. It provides an internal base on which a country can build even in periods of world crisis; it is a source of military and economic strength with which no independent country can dispense.

The effects of industrialisation are the expansion of the internal market by multiplying the trade between the new towns and the rural areas, and the building up of a balanced economy dependent neither on one crop nor one industry.

But while it is typical of all colonial countries that their industrial-

development has been retarded, such development will not necessarily liberate them. The first question is: real or sham industrialisation? Many who advocate the economic development of backward and colonial countries have in mind the expansion of consumers' goods industries, the processing of foodstuffs, raw materials and the like. Certainly, all this is highly desirable, but unless it leads to the development of a capital goods industry it will not constitute genuine industrialisation. The second, more fundamental, question is: industrialisation—under whose control? In Kenya, as in other countries, certain limited manufacturing industries arose following the world economic crisis and the stimulus of the Second World War. But none of them is in the hands of Africans. Industrial development may take place without conferring any benefits on the majority of the people and, in fact, may merely exploit them in new ways. Or it may be designed to make Kenya an even more useful appendage of British imperialist economy. The conclusion is, therefore, that industrialisation must be controlled by and designed to benefit the mass of the people, viz. the Africans.

### *Is Industrialisation Possible in Kenya?*

The needs of the people of Kenya for textiles and clothing, shoes, furniture, good housing, adequate lighting, processed foods, books and newspapers, agricultural equipment and every kind of manufacture are insatiable, and shared by all the peoples of East Africa.

Moreover, the resources are available with which a great extension of industrialisation is possible. And since Uganda and Tanganyika can often supply in resources what Kenya lacks, and *vice versa*, fruitful exchange becomes possible.

The basis of all industrial development is power. Britain's industry has been built up on coal. African industry of the future will most likely be based on hydro-electric power, of which it possesses (next to the U.S.S.R.) the greatest resources in the world. A survey of *available* power (in millions of horse-power) shows Kenya and Uganda as having 4·7, Tanganyika 2·7, the Rhodesias 2·5, South Africa 1·6 and Egypt 0·6.[1]

The scheme that would benefit Kenya most would probably be that which harnessed the fall of water from Lake Victoria down through Lake Kioga to Lake Albert; a fall of 1,500 feet with water,

[1] Cf. A. W. Postel, *Mineral Resources of Africa*, 1943.

amounting to 22,000 cusecs. Could all the power be drawn off by head to tail dams, it could give no less than 3,000,000 h.p.

Smaller, though important, schemes would include the harnessing of the Ripon Falls (a possible 13,000 h.p.) and the Murchison Falls in Uganda. Kenya has the Broderick Falls on the Nzoia River, while head-to-tail dams on the Tana River would supply a good deal of power (perhaps 50,000 h.p.).

Four main areas in Kenya appear to have a rainfall sufficient to give a substantial run-off. These are: the area above 8,000 feet on the top of the Aberdares; the area above 8,000 feet on Mt. Kenya; the area around Kericho and the high areas on Mt. Elgon and the Cheranganis.

Important as hydro-electricity will undoubtedly become, there are other sources of fuel not yet exploited. Coal, for example, is said to exist at Ufipa, near Lake Tanganyika, and has been located in Nyasaland. Fuel from vegetable oils has been investigated, and during the war production of a high-quality oil was quickly secured in Kenya.[1] Cotton seed from Uganda and locally grown sunflower seeds could be utilised in this way.

There is, finally, the fuel which is imported. The oil-producing regions of the Middle East are nearer the port of Mombasa than to Britain, and there is no reason why petroleum products should not be imported into Kenya at reasonable rates and carried through a pipe-line constructed from Mombasa, say, to Nairobi.

The power is there if it is desired to develop it.

A preliminary survey suggests that, not only the power, but valuable mineral deposits are also present. Gold has already been discussed. With it in Nyanza Province is often to be found silver, which is also present with base metals in the Coast Province. Arsenical pyrites are common in the Nyanza Province, with very large deposits in the Kakamega District. It can be used in arsenite of soda for cattle dips. The bulk of it could be used for production of sulphuric acid. Drugs, wood preservatives and cleaning agents in glass manufacture represent some of the uses of arsenic. Asbestos (amphibole) is to be found in Machakos and West Suk, and is used as fabric for brake-linings, ropes, cords, etc., for special purposes, and for insulating electric conductors, etc. Barytes (used in preparation of compounds as a body for certain kinds of paper and cloth, as well as white pigment, and as an inert body in coloured paints) of fine quality is found in association with lead in the Coast

[1] Cf. 1944 Report, East African Research Board.

Province. Two promising gold-copper deposits are (or were) being developed in South Kavirondo. Corundum, diatomite, graphite, gypsum, kyanite, manganese, mica and many other minerals are all present. Limestone coral and other limestones are abundant in the Coast Province. Enormous quantities of crystalline limestone (marble) are located near Voi, Kajiado, Machakos, in the Loldaika Hills and elsewhere.[1] There is no doubt that ample materials are available for the building industry as well as for the production of pottery.[2] Kenya's greatest mineral deposit is at Lake Magadi. The soda deposits on the crust alone is estimated at 200 million tons, with as much again in the saturated solution below it. It could supply the whole need for detergents in Africa, South Asia and possibly South America for a very long time.

It should be noted that high-grade tin-ore deposits are being worked in the Western Province of Uganda, while iron, lead and nickel ores are reported in Tanganyika.

But most of East Africa has not yet been surveyed. Of Kenya's 219,730 square miles, only one-third (73,530) has been topographically mapped; 43,000 square miles have been surveyed, but require revision, while 24,000 square miles have been partially surveyed by air. The balance of 146,200 square miles has never yet been surveyed. The position is even worse in Tanganyika, where 94 per cent. of the territory has never been surveyed.[3] Such a survey will certainly reveal new sources of wealth for the African peoples.

A potential skilled labour force ready to develop these resources exists. The Askari proved in Abyssinia and Burma that they could use the complicated machinery of modern weapons as skilfully as their white comrades. Those who led them spoke highly of their initiative and adaptability. Many thousands of them learned new skills. "For wartime needs, the system of technical training had to be modified in order to turn out a large number of men in a limited period. At one school alone thousands of carpenters, blacksmiths, tinsmiths, fitters, painters and shoemakers had been trained. They were so exceptionally good that the Royal Navy and the R.A.F. asked the Army to run classes for their men. Perhaps the most notable thing taught to Africans was the work of dismantling aero engines. Another school taught drivers by the thousand, and

[1] *Dominions Office and Colonial Office List*, 1940.

[2] Cf. *E.A.S.*, January 4th, 1946.

[3] Central Organisation for Geodetic and Topographical Surveys in the Colonial Empire, Col. No. 200, May, 1946.

they took their vehicles through deserts and jungles as well as modern cities, and in what were sometimes appalling weather conditions. Africans had also been trained as telegraphists, radio-operators, dental mechanics, clerks and other specialists."[1]

A committee of Kenya Europeans wrote of the Askari: "His capacity for taking responsibility and his skilled work have surprised those who knew him only as a manual labourer."[2]

The many thousands of Askari now discharged constitute a large skilled and semi-skilled force which can make a splendid contribution to the productive capacity of the country.

### *Why has Kenya's Industrial Development been retarded?*

The power and the natural resources are available; so are the human resources. What, then, has held back their fullest use?

First, Kenya has been regarded chiefly as a source of raw materials and certain foodstuffs. Capital investment took place chiefly in European agriculture and mining, and the construction of railways and harbours which would exploit these sources more easily. The big commercial firms which operate in Kenya have, up to the moment, not been interested in developing production, but have been content to draw off the wealth accumulated by trade.

Secondly, Kenya has been looked on as an important market for British manufactures. The value of British imports into Kenya and Uganda amounted to £4,430,000 in 1939, or 40·2 per cent. of the total imports. They have risen higher since. A large part of these imports from Britain consist of manufactured consumers' goods which independent and developing countries produce (at least in part) for themselves. British manufacturers and their agents in East Africa have been opposed to any developments which would create competition. This has largely coincided with the desires of European farmers themselves, who want no rivals for the supply of African labour.

Thirdly, industrialisation has been held back for fear of its political consequences: the stimulation of the national movement and the creation of a compact African proletariat. For many years a strange game has been played in Kenya—that of pretending that every African has a permanent home in the reserves and that those living

[1] General Sir William Platt, G.O.C.-in-C., East Africa Command, 1941–4, speaking at a joint meeting of the Royal African Society and Royal Empire Society, October 31st, 1945.

[2] *Report of Sub-Committee on Post-War Employment of Africans*, 1943, p. 5.

in the towns are only temporary town-dwellers. On these grounds, the provision of permanent housing and welfare amenities has been grossly neglected, trade unions have been discouraged and special ordinances introduced to restrict the growth of an urban population.

A policy of retarding industrial development in the colonies is, for these main reasons, instigated by the British Government and complied with by the colonial governments. Sir Bernard Bourdillon, Governor of Uganda, 1932–5, and then Governor of Nigeria until 1943, has written: "In the absence of an active industrialisation policy on the part of the Government (and it has hitherto been absent) the only hope for industrialisation in the colonies has been British capital and British skill, both of which have been definitely opposed to it. Taking the short point of view, the establishment of, say, a cotton factory in Uganda (which grows plenty of good cotton) might considerably reduce the sale in East Africa of cheap British blankets. But it would very greatly increase the wealth of Uganda, and the consequent capacity to buy other and much more valuable goods. . . . In actual fact, British opposition to the industrialisation of the colonies is seriously retarding the growth of a potentially very large market for British goods."[1]

Not all are so outspoken. Some put up the excuse that it is Kenya's poverty of natural resources which holds back developments. But these resources have scarcely been investigated. Others say that the restrictive factor is the small internal market. But that internal market is small because of poverty, and industrialisation is an essential measure for attacking poverty.

The Kenya Government has given no sign of a change in attitude towards industrial development. Under cover of the phrase, "Kenya is primarily an agricultural country," the building up of secondary industries is dismissed in a negative phrase. The *Interim Report on Development* states (1945): "Broadly speaking, the main articles which Kenya can export are articles which can be produced as cheaply, or more cheaply, than in other parts of the world, and for the most part these comprise agricultural products. The main basis, therefore, of Kenya's economic policy must therefore be toward an export policy. This does not mean that there should be no industrialisation."[2] With this last sentence, the whole question of industrial development is dismissed.

No less ominous is the commercial report on British East Africa

[1] Sir Bernard Bourdillon, *The Future of the Colonial Empire*, 1945, pp. 52–3.
[2] P. 9.

prepared by the Department of Overseas Trade: "Neither in man-power nor in natural resources is East Africa equipped to establish industrial enterprises, i.e. heavy industries or secondary manufacturing on any considerable scale."[1] The report throws doubt on the possibility of manufacturing industries started during the war, surviving in post-war competitive conditions. Of the factory for producing leather and leather manufactures, etc., it writes: "The successful operation of this plant as a commercial venture under post-war conditions is open to question."[2]

There is a serious danger that the Government-owned and Government-financed industries may be scrapped or sold to big British monopolies. I.C.I., no doubt, has its eyes on the Government chemical industries already operating, and Unilever will be interested in the oil-pressing industry on the Coast, especially if the East African ground-nuts scheme is operated. They have also announced their intention of building, at a cost of £750,000, a soap and edible oils factory at Kampala. In 1945 Mr. Hope-Jones was appointed as Kenya's Economic and Commercial Adviser. As a former economic adviser to the Anglo-Iranian Oil Co., he is not likely to inspire confidence among the Africans of his willingness to advise against the interests of the great monopolies.

In general, the Kenya Government is not prepared to take the road of bold industrial development. The wealthy representatives of the European farmers in Kenya will readily sell Kenya's birthright to such development for preference in the British (or Empire) market. The big British monopolies are opposed to such industrialisation unless it is under their control and they have hitherto been supported in this by official British policy.

### *Lines of Industrial Development*

Our survey has shown that industrial development is possible, but that it has been deliberately restricted. If we assume that the Labour Government in Britain decided to support industrialisation wholeheartedly, along what lines should it take place?

*Building and Construction.* Any big development would involve building and construction on a large scale. The new workers who come to the towns or factories will need to be housed. No less urgent is the rehousing of many thousands in Nairobi, Mombasa and other townships who to-day are compelled to live in slums

[1] P. 14. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 23.

incomparably worse than the worst in London or Liverpool. "In Nairobi to-day," a Kenya official has said, "there are approximately 30,000 natives who have nowhere to sleep except in premises which they can only occupy illegally."[1] Then must come the construction of public buildings for amenities and services, such as schools, hospitals and clinics, model farm buildings, welfare centres and the like. Public works construction would be greatly extended, covering the construction of dams, excavated tanks, road construction and ancillary buildings. Finally, factories, mining buildings, storage and electricity works would all require to be built. A very large part of the labour force would therefore be engaged in this work.

*Building Materials*. With the task of construction goes the preparation and manufacture of building materials, nearly all of which are to be found in or near Kenya. The excellent clays available would enable Kenya to make all the roofing tiles required.[2] (Much of the production could be done in rural areas.) Timber resources are not lacking. During 1935–9 annual consumption of timber was ⅛ cubic foot per head of population. If future demands were trebled, they could still be met by production in Kenya.[3] Production of wall and ceiling boards made from papyrus is already in process in a Government factory, and could be expanded. Stone-dressing, brickmaking, ballast and sand production are all possible on the spot. The large-scale production of cement by the existing factory would, of course, be essential.

*Processed Primary Products*. This represents an obvious development. There is a need for the extension of processing in sisal, coffee, tea, sugar, bacon, butter, canned meat, cotton lint, wheat flour, soya bean flour, ground-nuts, soda ash, and salt. Dehydration could be applied, not only to vegetables, but to fruit and meat. "The oil-extraction industry is capable of expansion and improvement. . . ."[4] The fish industry has an important future. In every sphere of food production there will be room for development as the living standards of the people are improved and a larger number enter non-agricultural employment.

*Glass and Earthenware*. All the raw materials are available for a big expansion in production. China clay, silica, white sand, soar or

[1] Mr. C. E. Mortimer, Commissioner of Lands and Settlement, K.L.C., November 20th, 1942.

[2] H. O. Weller, *Manufacture of Roofing Tiles in East Africa*, E.A.I.R.B., 1945.

[3] *Management of Cypress Plantations in Kenya*, 1945.

[4] East African Industrial Council, *E.A. and Rh.*, August 1st, 1946.

Cornish sand, magnesia clay, are all to be found. Excellent firebricks and drainpipes could be manufactured out of local materials.[1]

*Textiles and Clothing.* To meet local needs, the production of textiles and clothing requires expansion many times over. Cotton is grown locally and in Uganda; wool is available; jute has many possibilities. Piece-goods of various types, shirting, etc., could all be produced if the machinery is imported for the purpose. East African hides need not be exported in their raw state, but could be made into leather within Kenya.

From the leather, shoes and leather goods of all types could be produced.

*Basic Industries.* The development of the basic industries would be given priority. Of power resources we have already written. A planned programme of electrification by large- and small-scale schemes should be put in hand without delay. Chemical production has received some attention during the war, but its expansion is both urgent and desirable. The vast alkali deposits of Magadi, together with the sulphuric acid already manufactured from local pyrites, form the base for a wide range of chemical products. Mining, especially gold, will no doubt be extended, but the mining of base metals requires planning on a larger scale than hitherto.

Mining, chemicals and power provide the basis for the building up of an engineering industry. The manufacture of agricultural implements represents an obvious beginning. Cultivators, hoes, ploughs, drills and other implements are urgently required for an improvement in farming techniques. Dairy production would be assisted by manufacture of churns, butter-workers, pasteurisers, etc. The aluminium factory and small foundries which exist would all require expansion. The manufacture of small petrol and Diesel engines could be developed, as well as the production of pumps and presses, food-preparing machinery, etc. The construction of small coastal vessels is worth investigation. Great quantities of metal-ware of all kinds will be required in the course of the building programme.

It is of the greatest importance that a start be made with the production of machine tools. Die-casting machinery could at first be imported, and tool and gauge production begun as well as the manufacture of lathes, shaping, milling, and drilling machines.

How should such development be controlled? The major part of

[1] Mr. A. J. Campbell, of Industrial Management Board, *E.A.S.*, January 1st, 1946.

it would require to be under the control of the Government.[1] It is certain that only the Government will be able to finance such large-scale production. The East African Industrial Council, whose technicians have had valuable experience in starting new industries during the war, might well be the controlling body. But it is in sad need of reorganisation. It must have strong African representation. It must sponsor the overseas technical training of Africans so that from them will come the technicians, scientists and administrators that are required. Its present restrictive views must be replaced by an alive and ambitious outlook.

### *140,000 New Jobs*

The reader will remember that we calculated "overpopulation" in 1945 at 1,571,000. Natural increase will swell this figure by adding 450,000 to the total population in the next five years. If, as we suggest elsewhere, 453,000 people can be resettled in the Highlands, and the 167,540 workers who were engaged in non-agricultural employment in 1945 are offered wages and conditions which allow them to have their families with them, there will still remain well over three-quarters of a million people for whom new opportunities must be found.

The complete solution will not be found in a short period of time. The following, however, appears a practical programme for a five-year term.

It should be possible by planned development to absorb 140,000 additional workers with their dependants (which would make altogether about 420,000 people) into non-agricultural employment, within a period of five years. To put it another way, 140,000 new jobs in non-agricultural employment can and must be found in Kenya within that period. The total non-agricultural labour force would then be:

| | |
|---|---|
| In non-agricultural employment 1945 . . . . | 167,540 |
| To be shifted into non-agricultural employment . . | 140,000 |
| | 307,540 |

The round total will therefore be in the region of 308,000.

What should be the occupational distribution of this labour force? On the basis of the earlier discussion on lines of industrialisation, the following is suggested:

[1] See Memorandum on Colonial Mining Policy, Col. No. 206, 1946.

TABLE 39

*Proposed Manpower Distribution at End of Five-Year Programme*

| *Industry and services* | *No. ('000)* | *Per cent.* | *Labour distribution in manufacturing* | *No. ('000)* | *Per cent.* |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | Food, drink and tobacco[1] | 15 | 4·84 |
| (1) Building and construction | 90 | 29·23 | Clothing and bedding | 12 | 3·9 |
| | | | Textiles | 6 | 1·95 |
| (2) Manufacturing | 106 | 34·41 | Leather products | 6 | 1·95 |
| | | | Chemicals | 15 | 4·84 |
| (3) Mining | 16 | 5·19 | Paper, stationery and printing | 2 | 0·66 |
| (4) Electricity and water supply | 6 | 1·94 | Furniture, woodwork, pottery, glass | 10 | 3·25 |
| | | | Building materials | 17 | 5·53 |
| (5) Services | 90 | 29·23 | Light metals and electrical products | 9 | 2·93 |
| | | | Semi-manufactured metal and engineering | 12 | 3·9 |
| | | | Metal extraction and refining | 2 | 0·66 |
| Total | 308 | 100 | | 106 | 34·41 |

If we estimate that the capital cost of shifting a worker will average £300,[2] then the capital requirements will be £42 million for shifting 140,000 workers. Over a five-year period it is £8·4 million per annum. This does not take into account the additional capital required to modernise and fully equip existing industries, nor the large sums required for the improvement of agriculture and the carrying out of our resettlement proposals. It is plain that a programme of agricultural and industrial development will require capital investment on a considerable scale

*How is Kenya to finance such a Programme?* The greater part of

[1] If the ground-nuts scheme is carried through and the processing done locally, the number engaged in food processing would increase quite considerably.

[2] Cf. estimates by P. N. Rosenstein-Rodan, "Problems of Industrialisation of Eastern and South-eastern Europe," *Economic Journal*, June–September, 1943, and also K. Mandelbaum, *The Industrialisation of Backward Areas*, 1946.

the capital would certainly require to come from overseas in the shape of loans and credits. The reconversion of loans to a rate of 2½ per cent. would save hundreds of thousands of pounds each year which could be devoted to developmental purposes. But there are in Kenya itself untapped sources of revenue, chiefly among the non-African communities. The following are some of the more important fiscal measures required:

1. A 50–60 per cent. increase in revenue from income tax could be achieved by the following changes: minimum rate to be raised from 2*s.* to 4*s.* in the first £750 of taxable income, with a progressive rate rising by 1*s.* in the £1 for every additional £250 to £2,000 taxable. Thereafter by a further additional 3*s.* for the first £500 beyond and an additional 1*s.* per £1 for every additional £500, with a maximum rate of 17*s.* This would still mean a rate below the maximum in Britain.

2. The revenue from companies would be doubled by increasing the company rate from 4*s.* to 8*s.* in the £1.

3. A special development tax could be levied of 3*s.* in the £1 on all income derived from the colony by non-resident individuals and a surcharge of 3*s.* in the £1 on income similarly derived on non-resident companies. This could yield somewhere near £500,000 a year.

4. The rentals on Government land could be considerably increased, especially in townships. Plots worth anything from £2,000 to £6,000 are now paying rentals of only £2 a year.[1]

"It seems fair to say," wrote the East African Industrial Council, "that industrialists in East Africa have more money than ideas."[2] If that is the case, there is no excuse for the Government not providing the ideas and taking the money with which to realise them.

Part of the money raised must be used to supply the African farmer with credit and allow him to purchase the equipment he requires for sound and efficient farming. Credit must be provided also for industrial co-operatives set up by Africans. As joint-stock banks, with their conservative banking policy, are unlikely to give assistance on the scale necessary or on the most favourable terms, special facilities should be created by the Government. To secure the full benefit of these credit facilities, the Customs and railway rates structure would require to be recast.

*Is it in the interests of the British people to initiate such planned*

[1] Major F. W. Cavendish-Bentinck, K.L.C., April 22nd, 1942.
[2] *E.A. and Rh.*, August 1st, 1946.

*development in Kenya?* Such development would undoubtedly expand the market for British manufactures of all kinds. Industrialising countries, it is well known, are importers on a far larger scale than backward agrarian countries. In the period 1926–9 the British Dominions imported 50 per cent. more manufactures than China and India, yet they had only one-thirtieth of the two latter countries' population. The Dominions' net import of manufactures per head was forty to fifty times greater than that of China and India.[1] The growth in income and the needs of industrialisation expand the demand for imported manufactures. It is easy to see that imports into Kenya which to-day serve an extremely narrow market could be greatly increased if the African population could raise its living standards.

Every kind of internal equipment would be required for the housing and building programme. Machine tools, semi-manufactures in iron and steel, electrical machinery would all need to be imported, not in spite of, but because of industrial development. The demand for heavy agricultural machinery, tractors and the like, would expand as means were found for using this machinery for the improvement of African farming. In the very long run, it is to be expected that Kenya (and East Africa) would manufacture many of the goods she imports to-day. This would not necessarily mean a decline in trade, but a change in the character of that trade whereby the import of capital goods would have greater relative importance than the import of consumers' goods.

It should not be hastily assumed that industrialisation would reduce the volume of raw material and agricultural exports from Kenya to Britain or other countries. In the interests of the African people, the export of certain foodstuffs, such as maize, butter and other dairy products, would, of course, be much restricted if not stopped in the first few years. The export of other primary products, however, would be stimulated since it would be by such exports that Kenya would pay for a large part of her new demands for manufactured and capital goods.

It is a matter for regret that Labour Party policy on the industrial development of colonial countries is hesitant and over-cautious.

"The people of each territory should be trained and encouraged to subject raw materials to processing when necessary and possible. It is in this way that the gradual development of industry in Africa should be controlled, the object being to combine such development

[1] *Industrialisation and Foreign Trade*, League of Nations, 1945, p. 76.

with deliberate prevention of those evils which accompanied it everywhere in Europe. The only large-scale industrial operations in Africa which at present require consideration are transport—particularly railways—and mining. Both require to be integrated in the general plan for economic development."[1] This is the one-sided, "sham" industrialisation already referred to which under cover of its concern for colonial welfare retards the expansion of productive forces.

Improvement of Britain's economic relations with Kenya will require large-scale capital investment at low interest rates,[2] and an increase in the grants under the Colonial Development and Welfare Fund. Bulk purchase agreements which would provide guaranteed markets and reasonable prices for the African producer are also essential to Kenya's economic planning, and would, in turn, provide stable markets for Britain's products. To possess stability, such agreements should be part of inter-governmental commodity agreements. The Africans, however, must retain the right to decide their fiscal and trading policy as they think fit.

Friendship and mutual aid between the British people and the peoples of Kenya will only become possible if the programme outlined here is accompanied by the transfer of political power to the Africans.

[1] *The Colonies*, Transport House, 1943, p. 10.

[2] Capital should also be available from the International Bank to be set up under the Bretton Woods Agreement. But this would only be acceptable if it was provided without political conditions.

CHAPTER XI

# THE ROAD TO DEMOCRACY

WHATEVER varied opinions may be held by Europeans on the economic development of Kenya, there is almost solid agreement that there must be no political advance for the African.

This determination to check democracy is not always openly expressed. It finds its most specious form in the theory that what the African wants is bread, not the right to vote; improvements in his living standards, but not democracy. A Tory has written: "The immediate need of the natives of Kenya . . . is material economic improvement, not an improvised and exotic political constitution."[1] The argument has even been repeated by a Labour Secretary of State: "Political development is governed by social and economic progress . . . without great improvement in basic economic conditions, few of the colonies can be expected to show substantial social or political progress."[2]

It is gross sophistry to argue that the political backwardness of the colonies is the consequence of their economic backwardness. They are backward politically as they are economically because they are kept so.

Democracy for the Africans can no longer be regarded as an imported luxury. It is the only means of rousing the enthusiasm of the people and using their creative energies for constructive purposes. Without democracy, every plan for economic development will meet suspicion and even hostility, since the Africans do not lack experience of such development (mining, etc.) which enslaves them still further.

In spite of fierce opposition from the Europeans the Africans have increasingly asserted their title to all political rights. Their demands are inevitably linked with the growth of a national movement.

So long as the sharp demarcation between tribes existed and no intelligentsia or trader class emerged, it was not possible for a national movement to develop. The destruction of tribal bonds

[1] *One African Colony*, C. J. Wilson, 1945, p. 6. This booklet is published in the Tory "Signpost Series," and is therefore taken as a considered Tory viewpoint on Kenya affairs. Dr. Wilson for several years was a representative of African interests on the Kenya Legislative Council!

[2] *Mr. George Hall, House of Commons, July 9th, 1946.*

which has resulted from the colony's labour policy has in the course of time brought men of all tribes together, and given them common aims and interests. A considerable number have become completely urban, with no ties in the reserves whence they (or their parents) came. The administrative and technical needs of White Settlement have created a class of intelligentsia. The growing of cash crops has inevitably led to the emergence of an African trading class.

But no sooner do these groups strike out for better conditions and greater opportunities than they are met by fierce repression. Gradually, the African has learnt to meet repression by organised opposition. As long ago as 1923, protests occurred against the *kipande* and forced labour, under the leadership of Harry Thuku. With every year that passes, the African labourer in town and farm has learned the value of the strike weapon and has made increasing use of it, while here and there embryo trade unions have come into existence.

Underlying all this are the volcanic forces of agrarian discontent. The land-hunger of the Africans has become too fierce to be borne silently any longer. The fantastic and criminal schemes to remove hundreds of thousands of men, women and children with their livestock and their implements to barren, poorly-watered land while new European settlers are imported to take up the only fertile land sharpens the resentment of the Africans. It is significant that among the two groups most affected by European settlement, the Kikuyu and the Kavirondo, political organisation has been long established; no sooner repressed, as in 1939, than it has risen again.

All the conditions have been ripening for the formation of a national movement. The Askari's experiences on the battlefield and the awakening consciousness of democratic advance in Europe and in other colonial countries have served as a further powerful stimulus.

The Kenya African Union, established in recent years, represents the most successful attempt at an organised all-Kenya national movement. Its foremost aim is to unite all Kenya Africans irrespective of tribe. In conference and discussion a policy is being worked out along the following lines.

(1) More land for Africans, to come from Crown lands and unused areas of the "White" Highlands. Opposition to new European settlement plans. Expansion of agricultural education.

(2) A new deal for labour. Minimum wage, organisation of trade unions, abolition of *kipande* and pass laws.

(3) Improved trading facilities for Africans alongside credits and

good prices for the African farmer. Full encouragement of Africans to grow coffee and pyrethrum.

(4) Increased African representation on the Legislative and Executive Councils, as well as Standing Finance Committee.

(5) A speed up of the mass education programme. Compulsory education as first step in large towns. Overseas scholarships for Africans.

(6) Improvement of health services. Encouragement to Africans to become fully qualified doctors.

(7) Greater financial resources and powers to be made available for African local government authorities.

These are some of the most important questions on which the Kenya Africa Union is campaigning and winning wide support.

During 1946, meetings of the Kenya Africa Union in all parts of Kenya have been attended by thousands of people. Its second annual conference in early 1946, was attended by sixty delegates from country branches. The proceedings were relayed by loud-speaker to more than 1,000 people who were gathered outside the crowded conference hall.[1] Branches have been set up in all provinces.

Besides the official organ of the K.A.U., seven other African newspapers now appear. Of the total of eight, four are in Swahili and one each in Kikuyu, Luo, Kamba and Bantu Kavirondo The combined paid circulation is over 20,000 copies, but circulation is far wider, as newspapers pass from hand to hand.[2]

The leaders of the K.A.U. are rapidly becoming known in every part of Kenya as the champions of the people. Mr. Mathu, the first African to be a member of the Legislative Council, Mr. Gichuru, President of the Union, Mr. Khamisi, its Secretary, and many others, are coming forward as spokesmen for the Africans. The mass basis of their organisation will be in no doubt so long as it stands out as the organiser and champion of the peasantry.

The Europeans have not been slow to see the threat that this African movement may hold in store for them. The aims of the settlers' leaders, if attained, would thwart for ever all avenues of democratic advance for the Africans.

[1] For full account of Conference, see *E.A.S.*, February 8th, 1946.

[2] See *E.A. and Rh.*, March 7th, 1946. These developments have alarmed the settlers. One section of the European Electors' Union proposed a resolution viewing "with alarm the spread of unrest, largely due to subversive propaganda, and urges that immediate steps be taken by the Information Office to combat these malign influences."

First, they demand "a clear European unofficial majority on [the] Legislative Council."[1] Secondly, they press for increased White Settlement which would make easier the achievement of this majority. "White Settlement is absolutely essential—number one priority—in fact for the future of this territory. . . ."[2] Thirdly, they desire close unity with South Africa and the Rhodesias as a step towards a White Dominion from Kenya to the Cape. "Whatever we may aim at we must always keep in our minds the great necessity of having a strong white British line from Kenya to the Cape."[3] These aims are not new. They have been repeatedly voiced for the past twenty-five years.

The leaders of the settlers see in South Africa the image of the country they wish Kenya to be. At every crisis they have turned towards her. Time and again anti-African legislation which has been tested in South Africa finds its way on to the list of Kenya Ordinances. They welcome the growth of South African imperialism, which stretches out after the Protectorates, South-West Africa, and northwards to the Rhodesias, East and Central Africa. In Smuts and the Lords of the Rand they see a protection against the swing to the Left in Britain and the changes it might bring in colonial policy.

The economic and political aims of the settlers' leaders stand in open conflict with the democratic demands of the Africans. "Let us concentrate," said Colonel E. S. Grogan, "on extending the welfare of our own people, and the devil take the hindmost."[4] There spoke the true voice of settler leadership.

What is the relation of the Indians to this main conflict? One must understand first of all their economic role in Kenya.

The Indian community has grown with great rapidity from 11,000 in 1921 to nearer 100,000 in 1946. In 1938 40 per cent. of the Indian population was engaged in commerce, about 17 per cent. in industry and only 1½ per cent. in agriculture. In industry they are mainly artisans and contractors. In agriculture they are only important in sugar-production. They are the universal middlemen of the countryside. In 1944, the Labour Census revealed that Indians employed nearly twice as many African shop, store and office boys and rather

[1] Sir A. Vincent, reported, *E.A.S.*, January 25th, 1946.

[2] Mr. W. G. Nicol, *ibid.*, January 31st, 1946.

[3] Sir A. Vincent, addressing Mombasa meeting, February 1st, 1946, and reported *Colonial Times*, March 30th, 1946.

[4] Reported, *E.A.S.*, March 26th, 1946.

more artisans and mechanics than Europeans. Reports suggest that they have strengthened their grip on trade during the war, assisted by the growing share of India in Kenya's exports and imports. They also form a large part of the Civil Service, Police Force and airway establishments.

The Indians have one overriding fear. They know that if the European settlers were to win complete political control their status would be reduced to that of their brothers in South Africa. They already experience certain forms of discrimination. They vote on a communal, not a common roll. Though more than three times the size of the European population, they have less than half the latter's representation. They are not allowed to buy land in the European Highlands. Steps are being taken to prevent the free immigration into Kenya of their countrymen. There is therefore sharp antagonism and rivalry between the Indian and European communities, accentuated by the influence of the national independence struggle in India itself.

The aims of the Indians may be summed up as: common electoral roll, common franchise, equal opportunity for assisted settlement and unrestricted immigration.

The stronger the African movement for democracy grows, the more Europeans and Indians seek to use it on behalf of their own claims. Thus the Europeans tell the Africans that their main enemies are the Indian traders and artisans who stand in their way. The Indians, on the other hand, seek, when convenient, to win the co-operation of the African against the Europeans.

Though difficulties arise due to the conflict between the emerging class of African traders, craftsmen and intelligentsia and their long-established Indian counterparts, there is no doubt that the mass of the Indians are the natural allies of the Africans in the joint struggle against discrimination and European dictatorship.[1]

By what means are the Africans to secure more political power?

A Socialist policy for Kenya can mean nothing less than the shifting of full political power to the Africans in the shortest possible time. Such a transfer of power inevitably means the abolition of

[1] The East African Indian National Congress at its eighteenth session, in September, 1946, passed the following resolution: "This Congress is of the opinion that it is vitally necessary to promote full understanding between the African, Arab and Indian communities and that practical steps should be taken as early as possible to create an organization to work for their general advancement." *Colonial Times*, September 21st, 1946.

Crown Colony government. But even within the present framework immediate advances are necessary.

The fight for the African's political rights in Kenya is taking place on three main constitutional battlefields; the central government apparatus, local government, and the proposed inter-territorial authority for Kenya, Uganda and Tanganyika. Each of these is here considered in turn.

Among the settlers' leaders, strong opposition has always existed to any African representation on the Legislative Council. "The East African," it is argued, "has hitherto failed to develop the mental and moral character which would justify his being placed in authority over his fellow Africans to the extent implied by democratic self-government for the colony as a unit."[1] As the result of strong pressure from the Africans, one African has been admitted as a nominated member of the Legislative Council. The extension of this principle is viewed, however, with alarm. For many years the settlers' leaders have advocated separate bodies on the South African model, intended to shunt African political activities on to a track which would not lead to control of the main organs of political power.[2]

As long ago as 1928, asked for his opinion on the "future political destiny of the native," Lord Delamere stated: "The policy we visualise for the time being is that the natives should to a very large extent govern their own affairs in their own reserves through the native councils. Ultimately, some co-ordination of these native councils should take place. Finally, there should be a central native council which should be brought into close liaison with the ordinary legislature. . . ."[3] More recently a Tory M.P. wrote: "It will be our aim gradually, over the next fifty years, to train the African and Indian in the methods and ethics and honesty of local government, so that from the Local Native Councils, the Central Advisory Committee, or whatever it is called, more of the Africans and Indians will become government-minded, and be able to understand the wider implications of the local legislative assemblies. . . ."[4]

[1] C. J. Wilson, *op. cit.*, p. 4.

[2] "But do let us provide a constitutional chain by means of African Provincial Councils and a Central African Council—and let them prove their merit—before setting more Africans on perches in Legislative Council." From leader of the *Kenya Weekly News*, leading organ of the settlers. Quoted, *E.A. and Rh.*, November 28th, 1946.

[3] Quoted, Huxley, Vol. 2, p. 228.

[4] Colonel C. E. Ponsonby, M.P., reported, *E.A.S.*, June 25th, 1945.

The Africans know well enough that there cannot be two parliaments under the same government. The Legislative and Executive Councils, they understand, are the main political organs of Government. On these, then, the Africans must have full representation.

The alleged unfitness of the African for political leadership is only one excuse given for denying democratic rights to the Africans. Another is: the African is illiterate, therefore he cannot vote. The African in Kenya, knowing that neither the settler nor the Government proposes to liquidate illiteracy, rightly considers this argument a piece of hypocrisy. And, in fact, wherever it has been grappled with, illiteracy has been no obstacle to the exercise of adult suffrage. In Italy, Yugoslavia and other European countries, democratic elections have proved possible despite widespread illiteracy. Even in India and Ceylon, voting has been made possible for illiterate people. Sometimes symbols sometimes different colours (or both) are used to distinguish candidates. In Yugoslavia the voter does not even have to mark a cross on a piece of paper, but passes his hand over each of a number of boxes, each carrying the distinguishing mark of a candidate or party, and drops a small rubber ball in the box of his choice. If a similar method has not been worked out to meet African conditions, it is not illiteracy but political opposition which has stood in the way.

On the assumption that adult suffrage for all over the age of eighteen is feasible,[1] the following proposals are made for greater democracy is central and local government.

On the Legislative Council, Africans must have, as an immediate step, equal representation with the Europeans, leading to an African majority. The Africans, that is to say, should have eleven elected representatives. Moreover, all these representatives must be *Africans*. In Kenya there are Africans well able to represent their people. If the British Government has been prepared to recommend equal representation of unofficials on an inter-territorial Central Legislative Assembly, there is no reason why it should not establish this same principle in Kenya

Such an increase in representation would allow the Africans on the Legislative Council to have their members on the Executive

[1] Even if this principle were accepted, it would be essential to guard against property and similar qualifications which are more restrictive than literacy tests. In Southern Rhodesia for example property qualifications effectively disfranchise the majority of the African population.

Council and on the important Standing Finance Committee. On all advisory committees it would be possible for them to have parity at least with European unofficials. It remains intolerable that European unofficials should be allowed to control such vital posts as that of Member for Agriculture, Animal Husbandry and Natural Resources.

In a colony, the powers of the Civil Service are extraordinarily great. There are few functions of government which a District or Provincial Commissioner, for example, is not empowered to perform. It is essential that the African Civil Servant should not be confined to clerical and similar subordinate work. An extension of democracy in central government is unreal unless the fullest opportunities are given to Africans to train for and fill the highest administrative and judicial positions. The present racial stratification of the Kenya Civil Service must end of course.

In local Government also lie great possibilities for democratic advance. It is here that the exercise of universal suffrage will familiarise the people with new forms of democracy. African local authorities, given normal democratic powers, can train thousands of citizens in the methods of administering education, health services, municipal enterprises and the rest. African local government in Kenya must therefore be reorganised on new lines.

A new structure is required which would bring local government close to the people. The area covered by the Local Native Council to-day is too big for democratic government. In place of the existing structure, we would propose a three-tier system. A headman's location may contain anything from 5,000 to 30,000 inhabitants. The base should be a multitude of councils corresponding approximately to the locations. They would be close to the people and avoid the dangers of bureaucracy. Their power, however, would be derived from District Councils, which would constitute the second tier. The District Councils would exercise all the powers granted to it by the appropriate Ordinances or Acts. It would delegate whatever powers it thought necessary to the Location Councils. Councillors would be directly elected to both councils. At the apex of the structure would be an African Local Government Co-ordinating Committee with power to approve by-laws, estimates and discuss policy. Such a Committee would be based on the District Councils and not be subordinate to any European-dominated Local Government Board.

African local government must not merely be reorganised, but

given new powers. In particular, the District Councils must have powers in education and agriculture. The formation of education committees, replacing the Education Boards, has already been proposed. Agriculture committees, too, should be set up which would co-operate with the local Agricultural Officers in carrying out soil-conservation plans, running model farms, providing agricultural instruction and so on. These powers will inevitably encroach on the present powers of the chief. Real democracy requires that the chiefs shall come under the control of the local authorities as a transitional step to abolition of their position. The overriding powers of District and Provincial Commissioners which hamstring African local government to-day must go also. Until this happens, local government will never be regarded with confidence by the Africans. The power to make by-laws and practise all the normal functions of local government without interference from individual officials must be recognised as an elementary democratic right. Controlling power should be exercised by the Co-ordinating Committee already described.

Finally, no reorganisation will prove effective unless the local authorities have increased financial powers and resources. A rebate on Government taxes of at least 50 per cent. should be given to the District Council, together with grants to enable even the poorest council to maintain minimum services. More investigation is required into systems of African taxation in order that taxes should be levied according to the ability of the inhabitants to pay. For any large-scale schemes of development, the local authorities will require loans. A local government Loans Board might well be set up so that arrangements might be made to raise necessary loans at low rates of interest.

In the European settled areas, every District Council and Municipal Board should be required by law to have African representation as a transitional stage towards a unified local government system based on universal suffrage.

It would be foolish to look upon these proposed changes in central and local government as in the nature of an experiment. The extension of democracy which is taking place throughout the world to-day is no experiment. The demand for democratic rights, which grows stronger each day among the Africans, is part of a world-wide process. Attempts to thwart or sidetrack these demands will only arouse bitterness and hostility, and make a peaceful settlement impossible.

The African's road to democracy is obstructed not only by the Europeans within Kenya. The new scheme for Inter-territorial Organisation in East Africa advanced by the Colonial Office may prove a far more serious obstacle.[1] Affecting as it does the Africans of Tanganyika and Uganda as well as Kenya, it is more fully discussed here.

What is this scheme (which we shall call 191—its Colonial Office number)?

191 states that the territories of Uganda, Kenya and Tanganyika form a common geographical and economic area, and as such require administrative machinery of an inter-territorial nature. The conference of East African Governors, which up to the present has been the main form of inter-territorial consultation, has important weaknesses. It has no juridical or constitutional basis. Consequently, when common legislation is necessary, identical ordinances have to be presented separately to the three legislatures.

Before making its detailed proposals, 191 makes two points. "First, the final responsibility to Parliament for the administration of the three territories must continue to rest in future, as it does at the present time, with His Majesty's Government as trustees for the welfare of their inhabitants. . . . Secondly, the proposals which follow involve neither political closer union nor the fusion of the East African governments."[2]

The proposals provide for an East African High Commission consisting of the Governors of the three territories with the Kenya Governor as chairman, a Central Legislature and an executive organisation supported in appropriate cases by advisory boards—some of them already established during the war. The economic services already established on a common basis are to continue. The Central Legislature is to be made up of thirty-six members, twenty-four of whom are to be unofficials. Of these six European members and six Indian members would be elected by their respective representatives on the territorial legislative councils. Six members, "as many as possible of whom would be Africans," would be "nominated by the High Commission as trustees for African interests, two from each territory." Two members to represent Arab interests and four others are to be nominated by the High Commission.

Why did the British Government put forward this scheme? It

[1] Colonial No. 191. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 4.

is manifestly a Tory production.[1] Taken together with the new Trusteeship proposals for Tanganyika, it is intended to assist in preparing East Africa as a key base in Britain's strategy for the Middle East and the Indian Ocean.[2] 191 is the fruit of an imperialistic foreign policy—*an instrument of imperial strategy forged during a time of Tory domination.*

Further, 191 is identified with reactionary circles within the three territories.

Closer union has been the theme of a twenty years' fight by the leaders of European settlement, backed by men like Amery when he was Secretary of State.

Commercial interests have always been interested in any scheme that would lessen restrictions on trade and provide common economic services for East Africa. The leaders of the settlers in Kenya (and Delamere particularly) have believed it would win them hegemony in Eastern Africa and, moreover, attract more capital to the territory.

Precisely because they see *191* as a means to Kenya settler domination over all three territories, the Tanganyika Africans have set their face resolutely against the scheme. They see the so-called "equal representation" of Europeans, Indians and Africans as a farce. Out of the thirty-six official and unofficial members of the proposed Central Legislative Assembly, not more than six (if that) would be Africans, and twenty-two would almost certainly be Europeans. The Governor of Kenya, an official especially susceptible to settler pressure, is to be permanent Chairman of the High Commission. They realise that closer economic union inevitably tends towards closer political union, despite the White Paper's statement. More than anything, they fear Kenya's "native policy." At an all-African meeting held in Dar-es-Salaam under the auspices of the Tanganyika African Association, it was decided that *191* was unacceptable at the present time.[3] The Moshi African Association went further, and said that 191 would continue to be unacceptable "unless and until complete freedom is achieved by the Kenya Africans."[3]

In Kenya itself the vulgar, noisy rantings of the settlers' leaders have tended to obscure the true issues. The recommendation contained in 191 for equal racial representation of unofficial members

[1] ". . . I cannot disclaim considerable responsibility for the scheme which was put out in that paper. I think the main lines had been settled during my time at the Colonial Office." Colonel Oliver Stanley, House of Commons, July 9th, 1946.

[2] See Introduction.

[3] *E.A.S.*, February 14th, 1946.

raises a question of principle. If equal representation is to be conceded on the inter-territorial Legislature, the signal is given for changes on the Kenya Legislature also, and the long period of settler domination on that body is threatened. Hence the acceptance of 191 with some reservations by the Kenya 'Africans' spokesmen. Hence also a high-powered campaign of opposition by the settlers' leaders, directed, not against the proposals as a whole (despite the impression given), but against the one proposal which may imperil their interests. Their object is to cause so much obstruction that the concessions they want are extorted from the Imperial Government.

In submitting "alternative proposals" to 191, they make their aim clear:

"The undersigned European elected members of the Legislative Council of Kenya believe that these proposals [in 191] contain principles, such as that of equal representation of the main races . . . the acceptance of which would be injurious to the interests of the people they represent and of the Colony and Protectorate as a whole. . . . We appreciate the African claim to advance to greater representation in the councils of Kenya in the future, but believe the rate of that advance must be based on proven ability gained through experience and service on local government bodies, Local Native Councils, etc. . . ."[1]

191, as we have outlined, brings with it the most serious danger for the African peoples. We do not doubt that a federation of East African territories is inevitable but it must not be imposed from above. It must arise from the democratically expressed desires and needs of the peoples of these territories.

### *Wanted—a New Colonial Policy*

The picture which emerges from our survey of Kenya is repugnant. This is because colonial policy has been shaped by those who derive much of their wealth and power from colonial exploitation.

The question now is: will the Labour Government continue this policy or break with it?

The colonial peoples (not least those of Kenya) welcomed Labour's victory in July, 1945. Now, they thought and said, justice will be done. They have been cruelly disappointed. It is this Labour Government which has defended many of the features of colonial rule described by us. Speaking in Kenya, the present Secretary of State for the Colonies declared that the British Government were

[1] *E.A. and Rh.*, May 30th, 1946.

determined to be faithful in colonial administration to the ideals and traditions of the past.[1] In the first Colonial Debate to be held by the new Labour Government, Colonel Oliver Stanley, the former Tory Secretary of State, remarked on Labour's policy: "I listened to it with great interest, and, I must confess, with a certain amount of familiarity. It did not seem to differ greatly in essentials from the policies which have been declared on previous occasions."[2]

The difference between Labour's colonial policy to-day and that declared before the elections is illustrated in two speeches by Mr. Creech-Jones, now Secretary of State for the Colonies. Speaking in 1943 he declared:

"We fear that the effect of further European settlement may be not only to perpetuate, but to increase the difficulties of government. . . . It may be inevitable and desirable that many of these good, neglected lands in the 'White' Highlands shall be used by selected Africans along the lines of some resettlement scheme. The present policy in the European Highlands in a stratified society, in which blacks can be put to labour for the Europeans on the European lands, means the continued existence of a dominant people, and that seems to us to be an indefensible policy altogether."[3]

In 1946, however, Mr. Creech-Jones approves of new White Settlement, and states:

"We are in a very troubled world, many of the storm centres are in the Middle East. No one can see what is likely to happen right across Asia during the next year or two. Accordingly, it would be the height of folly for us to create a situation in East Africa which would react directly on the problems facing us in the Middle East and other parts of Asia. . . ."[4]

Once Tory foreign policy is continued, it cannot be reconciled with democratic principles. An imperialist strategy which intends to maintain power in the Middle East and in India necessarily demands an increased grip on East Africa as a vital link in the imperial plan. It is this which has led to Labour's "about-turn" on new White Settlement in Kenya.

By the single act of supporting the scheme for increased White Settlement the Labour Government has forfeited the confidence of the 4 million Kenya Africans. "We had to start our discussions," said Mr. Creech-Jones in justification, "on the basis of the Carter

[1] *E.A. and Rh.*, August 1st, 1946. [2] *Hansard*, July 9th, 1946.

[3] *Ibid.*, December 17th, 1943.

[4] Address to Fabian Colonial Bureau, January 9th, 1946.

Commission, which had already allocated certain lands to the Africans and to Europeans. . . ."[1]

The Labour Government need not suppose it can hide behind the massive volumes of the Carter Report. If justice is not done, land-hunger will sweep aside the Carter Report. Already the Nandi took to the fertile but unoccupied farms of Kaimosi and Kipkarren. The Wakamba want back the lands near Yatta. The Teita demand land back from Teita Concessions Ltd. Jipe Estates is claimed by the Taveta. The Masai are reopening their claims to land in Laikipia, Naivasha and Uasin-Gishu.

Alliance with reactionary policies in Kenya means the impoverishment of the Africans; the strangulation of the internal market and the capacity of the people to buy British goods. It means that we earn the hostility of the Africans. It strengthens those imperial trading and financial interests which constitute an important part of Toryism in Britain.

A new policy is required which would apply to Kenya the democratic principles we demand for Britain. Crown colony rule cannot solve the agrarian problem of Kenya, cannot bring widespread industrial development, cannot tap the creative energies of the people or brush aside vested interests. The Labour Government must make a clear declaration that it recognises the right of the African peoples of Kenya to independence and that it will give them every assistance to build up a democratic, self-governing State

Within a democratic Kenya, the problem of the Indian and European minorities would be solved in the interests of the entire people. Even now there are some among both minorities who recognise the need to stand together with the Africans and oppose the handful of landlords, traders and financiers who exploit them.

Shall the Africans be our friends or enemies?

Britain has much to learn from the Soviet Union on the transformation of colonial peoples into free peoples. The new multinational state of Yugoslavia and other of the new democracies of Europe have much to teach. Using this knowledge, applying the kind of programme outlined in this book, the people of Kenya could be won as friends and allies. But the credit of the Labour Government is dwindling fast. The Labour Movement and all democrats must act quickly if we are not to lose the confidence of the colonial peoples, if we are to win their co-operation in the immense tasks of construction which are before us.

[1] *Ibid.*

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